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The Complete Works of

VICTOR HUGO

The MAN WHO LAUGHS

HOOPER, CLARKE & COMPANY

PUBLISHERS & NEW YORK & CHICAGO

Fiction
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PREFACE.

IN England, everything is great, even what is not good, — even Oligarchy. The English Patriciate is the patriciate in the absolute sense of the word. No more illustrious, more terrible, or more vigorous feudality exists. Let us add that this feudality has been useful at times. It is in England that the phenomenon of Seigneurie must be studied, as in France the phenomenon of Royalty must be studied.

The true title of this book should be "Aristocracy." Another book that will follow may, perhaps, be entitled "Monarchy." These two books, if it is given to the author to finish his task, will precede and introduce another, to be called "Ninety-Three."

HAUTEVILLE HOUSE, 1869.

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THE MAN WHO LAUGHS.

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PART I.

THE SEA AND THE NIGHT.

I.

TWO PRELIMINARY CHAPTERS.

URSUS.

I.

URSUS and Homo were fast friends. Ursus was a man, Homo a wolf. Their dispositions corresponded. It was the man who had christened the wolf: probably he had also chosen his own name. Having found "Ursus" fit for himself, he had found "Homo" fit for the beast. Man and wolf turned their partnership to account at fairs, at village *fêtes*, at the corners of streets where passers-by throng, and out of the desire which people seem to feel to listen to idle nonsense, and to buy quack medicine. The wolf, gentle and courteously subordinate, diverted the crowd. It is a pleasant thing to behold the tameness of animals. Our greatest delight is to see all the varieties capable of domestication parade before us. It is this feeling that brings so many people out to view a royal *cortége*.

Ursus and Homo went about from cross-road to cross-road, from the High Street of Aberystwith to the High Street of Jedburgh, from country-side to country-side, from shire to shire, from town to town. One market exhausted, they went on to another. Ursus lived in a small van upon wheels, which Homo was civilized enough to draw by day and guard by night. On bad roads, up hills, and where there were too many ruts, or there was too much mud, the man buckled the trace round his neck and pulled fraternally, side by side, with the wolf. They had thus grown old together. They encamped at hap-hazard on a common, in the glade of a wood, on the waste patch of grass where roads intersect, at the outskirts of villages, at the gates of towns, in market-places, in public walks, on the borders of parks, or before the entrances of churches. When the cart drew up on a fair ground, where the gossips ran up open-mouthed and the curious formed a circle round the pair, Ursus harangued and Homo approved. Then Homo, with a bowl in his mouth, politely made a collection among the audience. Thus they earned their livelihood. The wolf was lettered, likewise the man. The wolf had been trained by the man, or had trained himself unassisted, to divers wolfish tricks, which swelled the receipts. "Above all things, do not degenerate into a man," his friend would say to him.

The wolf never bit: the man did, now and then. At least, that was his intention. He was a misanthrope, and to increase his misanthropy he had made himself a juggler: to live, also; for the stomach has to be consulted. Moreover, this juggler-misanthrope, whether to add to the complexity of his being or to perfect it, was a doctor. To be a doctor is nothing: Ursus was also a ventriloquist. You could hear him speak without his moving his lips. He counterfeited, so as to

deceive you, any one's accent or pronunciation. He imitated voices so exactly that you believed you heard the people themselves. All alone he could simulate the murmur of a crowd; and this gave him a right to the title of Engastrimythos, which he took. He reproduced the notes of all kinds of birds, — as of the thrush, the wren, the pipit lark, otherwise called the grey cheeper, and the ring ousel, — all travellers like himself; so that at times, when the fancy struck him, he made you aware either of a public thoroughfare filled with the uproar of men, or of a meadow loud with the voices of beasts, — at one time stormy as a multitude, at another fresh and serene as the dawn. Such gifts, although rare, exist. In the last century a man called Touzel, who imitated the mingled utterances of men and animals, and who counterfeited all the cries of wild beasts, was attached to the person of Buffon, — to serve as a menagerie.

Ursus was sagacious, contradictory, odd, and inclined to the singular expositions which we call fables. He even pretended to believe in them; and this impudence was a part of his humour. He read people's hands; opened books at random and drew conclusions; told fortunes; taught that it is dangerous to meet a black mare, and still more dangerous, as you start on a journey, to hear yourself accosted by one who does not know whither you are going. He called himself a dealer in superstitions. He used to say: "There is one difference between me and the Archbishop of Canterbury: I avow what I am." Hence it was that the archbishop, justly indignant, summoned him before him one day; but Ursus cleverly disarmed his Grace by reciting a sermon he had composed upon Christmas-day, which the delighted archbishop learned by heart, and delivered from the pulpit as his own. In consideration thereof, the archbishop pardoned Ursus.

As a doctor, Ursus wrought cures by varied means. He made use of aromatics; he was versed in simples; he made the most of the immense power which lies in a heap of neglected plants, such as the hazel, the catkin, the white alder, the white briony, the mealy-tree, the traveller's joy, the buckthorn. He treated phthisis with the sun-dew; at opportune moments he would use the leaves of the spurge, which plucked at the bottom are a purgative, and plucked at the top an emetic. He cured sore throat by means of the vegetable excrescence called "Jews' ear." He knew the rush which cures the ox, and the mint which cures the horse. He was well acquainted with the beauties and virtues of the herb mandragora, which, as every one knows, is of both sexes. He had many recipes. He cured burns with salamander wool, — of which, according to Pliny, Nero had a napkin. Ursus possessed a retort and a flask; he effected transmutations; he sold panaceas. It was said that he had once been for a short time in Bedlam; they had done him the honour to take him for a madman, but had set him free on discovering that he was only a poet. This story was probably not true; we all have to submit to some such absurd reports about ourselves.

The fact is, Ursus was a bit of a savant, a man of taste, and an old Latin poet. He was skilled in two forms of verse, — he Hippocratized and he Pindarized. He could have vied in bombast with Rapin and Vida. He could have composed Jesuit tragedies in a style no less successful than that of Father Bouhours. It followed from his familiarity with the venerable rhythms and metres of the ancients that he had peculiar figures of speech, and a whole family of classical metaphors at his command. He would say of a mother followed by her two daughters, "There is a dactyl;" of a father preceded by his two sons, "There is an anapæst;" and

of a little child walking between its grandmother and grandfather, "There is an amphimacer." So much knowledge could only end in starvation. The school of Salerno says, "Eat little and often." Ursus ate little and seldom, thus obeying one half the precept and disobeying the other; but this was the fault of the public, who did not always flock to hear him, and who did not often buy.

Ursus was wont to say: "The expectoration of a sentence is a relief. The wolf is comforted by its howl, the sheep by its wool, the forest by its finch, woman by her love, and the philosopher by his epiphomena." Ursus at a pinch composed comedies, which he all but acted in recital; this helped to sell the drugs. Among other works, he composed an heroic pastoral in honour of Sir Hugh Middleton, who in 1608 brought a river to London. The river was lying peacefully in Hertfordshire, twenty miles from London: the knight came and took possession of it. He brought a brigade of six hundred men, armed with shovels and pickaxes; set to breaking up the ground, scooping it out in one place, raising it in another, — now thirty feet high, now twenty feet deep; made wooden aqueducts high in air; and at different points constructed eight hundred bridges of stone, bricks, and timber. One fine morning the river entered London, which was short of water. Ursus transformed all these vulgar details into a fine Eclogue between the Thames and the New River, in which the former invited the latter to come to him, saying, "I am too old to please women, but I am rich enough to pay them," — an ingenious and gallant conceit to indicate how Sir Hugh Middleton had completed the work at his own expense.

Ursus was great in soliloquy. Of a disposition at once unsociable and talkative, desiring to see no one,

yet longing to converse with some one, he solved the difficulty by talking to himself. Any one who has lived a solitary life knows how deeply seated monologue is in one's nature. Speech imprisoned longs to find a vent. To harangue space is an outlet. To talk out loud when one is alone is as it were to have a dialogue with the divinity within. It was, as is well known, a habit with Socrates; he declaimed to himself. Luther did the same. Ursus took after those great men. He had the hermaphrodite faculty of being his own audience. He questioned himself, answered himself, praised himself, blamed himself. You heard him in the street soliloquizing in his van. The passers-by, who have their own way of appreciating clever people, used to say, "He is an idiot." As we have just observed, he abused himself at times; but there were times also when he did himself justice. One day, in one of these allocutions addressed to himself, he was heard to cry out: "I have studied vegetation in all its mysteries, — in the stalk, in the bud, in the sepal, in the stamen, in the carpel, in the ovule, in the spore, in the theca, and in the apothecium. I have thoroughly sifted chromatics, osmosis, and chymosis; that is to say, the formation of colours, of smell, and of taste." There was something fatuous, doubtless, in this certificate which Ursus gave to Ursus; but let those who have thoroughly sifted chromatics, osmosis, and chymosis cast the first stone at him.

Fortunately, Ursus had never gone into the Low Countries; there they would certainly have weighed him, to ascertain whether he was of the normal weight, above or below which a man is a sorcerer. In Holland this weight was sagely fixed by law. Nothing was simpler or more ingenious. It was a clear test. They put you in a scale, and the evidence was conclusive. Too

heavy, you were hanged; too light, you were burned. To this day the scales in which sorcerers were weighed may be seen at Oudewater; but they are now used for weighing cheeses. How religion has degenerated! Ursus would certainly have had a crow to pluck with those scales. In his travels he kept away from Holland, and he was wise. Indeed, we believe that he never roved beyond the limits of Great Britain.

However this may have been, he was very poor and morose; and having made the acquaintance of Homo in a wood, a taste for a wandering life came over him. So he took the wolf into partnership, and with him went forth on the highways, living in the open air the great life of chance. He had a great deal of industry and caution, and great skill in everything connected with healing operations, restoring the sick to health, and working wonders peculiar to himself. He was considered a clever mountebank and a good doctor. As may be imagined, he passed for a wizard as well: not much indeed,—only a little; for it was unwholesome in those days to be considered a friend of the devil. To tell the truth, Ursus, by his passion for pharmacy and his love of plants, laid himself open to suspicion, seeing that he often went to gather herbs in rough thickets where Lucifer's salads grew, and where, as has been proved by the Counsellor De l'Ancre, there is a risk of meeting in the evening mist a man who comes out of the earth, "blind in the right eye, bare-footed, without a cloak, and with a sword by his side." But for the matter of that, Ursus, although eccentric in manner and disposition, was too good a fellow to invoke or disperse hail, to make faces appear, to kill a man with the torment of excessive dancing, to suggest dreams fair or foul and full of terror, and to cause the birth of cocks with four wings. He had no such mischievous tricks. He was incapable of

certain abominations, — such for instance as speaking German, Hebrew, or Greek, without having learned them, which is a sign of unpardonable wickedness, or of a natural infirmity proceeding from a morbid humour. If Ursus spoke Latin, it was because he knew it. He would never have allowed himself to speak Syriac, which he did not know. Besides, it is asserted that Syriac is the language spoken in the midnight meetings at which uncanny people worship the devil. In medicine, he justly preferred Galen to Cardan, — Cardan, although a learned man, being but an earthworm in comparison with Galen.

To sum up, Ursus was not one of those persons who live in fear of the police. His van was long enough and wide enough to allow of his lying down in it on a box containing his not very sumptuous apparel. He owned a lantern, several wigs, and some utensils suspended from nails, among which were musical instruments. He possessed, besides, a bearskin with which he covered himself on his days of grand performance. He called this putting on full dress. He used to say, " I have two skins : this is the real one," pointing to the bearskin.

The little house on wheels belonged to himself and to the wolf. Besides his house, his retort, and his wolf, he owned a flute and a violoncello on which he played prettily. He concocted his own elixirs. His wits yielded him enough to sup on sometimes. In the top of his van was a hole, through which the pipe of a cast-iron stove passed so close to his box as to scorch the wood of it. The stove had two compartments : in one of them Ursus cooked his chemicals, and in the other his potatoes. At night the wolf slept under the van, amicably secured by a chain. Homo's hair was black, that of Ursus grey. Ursus was fifty, — unless, indeed, he was sixty. He accepted his destiny to such an extent that, as we have

URSUS AND HOMO.

just seen, he ate potatoes, — the trash on which at that time pigs and convicts were fed. He ate them sadly, but resignedly. He was not tall, — he was long. He was bent and melancholy. The bowed frame of an old man is the settlement in the architecture of life. Nature had formed him for sadness. He found it difficult to smile, and he had never been able to weep; so that he was deprived of the consolation of tears, as well as of the palliative of joy. An old man is a thinking ruin; and such a ruin was Ursus. He had the loquacity of a charlatan, the leanness of a prophet, the irascibility of a charged mine; such was Ursus. In his youth he had been a philosopher in the house of a lord.

This was a hundred and eighty years ago, when men were more like wolves than they are now. Not so very much though.

II.

Homo was no ordinary wolf. From his appetite for medlars and potatoes he might have been taken for a prairie wolf; from his dark hide, for a lycaon; and from his bark prolonged into a howl, for a Chilian dog. But no one has as yet examined the eyeball of a Chilian dog sufficiently to determine whether he be not a fox; and Homo was a real wolf. He was five feet long, which is a fine length for a wolf, even in Lithuania; he was very strong; he looked at you askance, which was not his fault; he had a soft tongue, with which he occasionally licked Ursus; he had a narrow brush of short bristles on his backbone, and he was lean with the wholesome leanness of a forest life. Before he knew Ursus and had a carriage to draw, he thought nothing of doing his fifty miles a night. Ursus meeting him in a thicket near a stream of running water had conceived a high opinion

of him from seeing the skill and sagacity with which he fished out crawfish, and welcomed him as an honest and genuine Koupara wolf of the kind called crab-eater.

As a beast of burden, Ursus preferred Homo to a donkey. He would have felt a repugnance to having his hut drawn by an ass; he thought too highly of the ass for that. Moreover, he had observed that the ass, a four-legged thinker little understood by men, has a habit of cocking his ears uneasily when philosophers talk nonsense. In life the ass counts as a third person between our thoughts and ourselves, and acts as a restraint. As a friend, Ursus preferred Homo to a dog, considering that the love of a wolf is more rare.

Hence it was that Homo sufficed for Ursus. Homo was for Ursus more than a companion, he was an analogue. Ursus used to pat the wolf's empty ribs, and say, "I have found the second volume of myself!" Again he said, "When I am dead, any one wishing to know me need only study Homo. I shall leave him as a true copy behind me."

The English law, which is not very lenient to beasts of the forest, might have picked a quarrel with the wolf, and punished him for his assurance in going freely about the towns; but Homo took advantage of the immunity granted by a statute of Edward IV. to servants: "Every servant in attendance on his master is free to come and go." Besides, a certain relaxation of the law had resulted with regard to wolves, in consequence of its being the fashion of the ladies of the Court under the later Stuarts to have, instead of dogs, little wolves, called "adives," about the size of cats, which were brought from Asia at great cost.

Ursus had taught Homo a portion of his accomplishments, — such as to stand upright, to restrain his rage into sulkiness, to growl instead of howl, etc.; and on

his part, the wolf had taught the man what *he* knew, — to do without a roof, without bread and fire, — and to prefer hunger in the woods to slavery in a palace.

This van, which served both as a dwelling and a vehicle, and which had travelled so many different roads without ever leaving Great Britain, had four wheels, with shafts for the wolf and a cross-bar for the man. The cross-bar came into use when the roads were bad. The van was strong, although it was built of light boards like a dove-cote. In front there was a glass door with a little balcony used for orations, which had something of the character of the platform tempered by the air of a pulpit. At the back there was a panelled door. By lowering three steps, which turned on a hinge below the door, access was gained to the hut, which at night was securely fastened with bolt and lock. Rain and snow had fallen plentifully on it; it had been painted, but in what colour it was difficult to say, changes of season being to vans what changes of reign are to courtiers. In front, outside, was a board, — a kind of frontispiece, — on which the following inscription might once have been deciphered; it was in black letters on a white ground, but by degrees the characters had become confused and blurred: —

"By friction, gold loses every year a fourteen hundredth part of its bulk. This is what is called the Wear. Hence it follows that on fourteen hundred millions of gold in circulation throughout the world, one million is lost annually. This million dissolves into dust, flies away, floats about, is reduced to atoms, drugs, weighs down consciences, amalgamates with the souls of the rich whom it renders proud, and with those of the poor whom it renders brutish."

The inscription, rubbed and blotted by the rain and by the kindness of Nature, was fortunately illegible, for

it is possible that the philosophical remarks concerning the circulation of gold might not have been to the taste of the sheriffs, the provost-marshals, and other big-wigs of the law. English legislation did not trifle in those days. It did not take much to make a man a felon. The magistrates were ferocious by tradition, and cruelty was a matter of routine. The judges of assize increased and multiplied. Jefferies had become a breeder of whelps.

III.

In the interior of the van there were two other inscriptions. Above the locker, on a whitewashed plank, a hand had written in ink as follows: —

The Only Things Necessary to Know.

The baron, peer of England, wears a cap with six pearls. The coronet begins with the rank of viscount. The viscount wears a coronet of which the pearls are without number. The earl, a coronet with the pearls upon points, mingled with strawberry leaves placed low between. The marquis, one with pearls and leaves on the same level. The duke, one with strawberry leaves alone, — no pearls. The royal duke, a circlet of crosses and *fleurs-de-lis*. The Prince of Wales, crown like that of the king, but unclosed.

The duke is "most high and most puissant prince," the marquis and earl "most noble and puissant lord," the viscount "noble and puissant lord," the baron "trusty lord." The duke is "his Grace;" the other Peers their "Lordships." "Most honourable" is higher than "right honourable."

Lords who are peers are lords in their own right. Lords who are not peers are lords by courtesy: — there are no real lords, excepting such as are peers.

The House of Lords is a chamber and a court, *Concilium et Curia*, legislature and court of justice. The Commons,

who are the people, when ordered to the bar of the Lords, humbly present themselves bareheaded before the peers, who remain covered. The Commons send up their bills by forty members, who present the bill with three low bows. The Lords send their bills to the Commons by a mere clerk. In case of disagreement, the two Houses confer in the Painted Chamber, the Peers seated and covered, the Commons standing and bareheaded.

Peers go to Parliament in their coaches in file; the Commons do not. Some peers go to Westminster in open four-wheeled chariots. The use of these and of coaches emblazoned with coats-of-arms and coronets is allowed only to Peers, and forms a portion of their dignity.

Barons have the same rank as bishops. To be a baron peer of England, it is necessary to be in possession of a tenure from the king *per Baroniam integram,* by full barony. The full barony consists of thirteen knights' fees and one third part, each knight's fee being of the value of twenty pounds sterling, which makes in all four hundred marks. The head of a barony (*caput baroniæ*) is a castle disposed by inheritance, as England herself,— that is to say, descending to daughters if there be no sons, and in that case going to the eldest daughter, *cæteris filiabus aliundè satisfactis.*[1]

Barons have the degree of lord,— in Saxon, *laford; dominus* in high Latin; *Lordus* in low Latin. The eldest and younger sons of viscounts and barons are the first esquires in the kingdom. The eldest sons of peers take precedence of knights of the garter. The younger sons do not. The eldest son of a viscount comes after all barons, and precedes all baronets. Every daughter of a peer is a "Lady." Other English girls are plain "Mistress."

All judges rank below peers. The sergeant wears a lambskin tippet; the judge one of vair, *de minuto vario,* made up of a variety of little white furs, always excepting ermine. Ermine is reserved for peers and the king.

[1] As much as to say, the other daughters are provided for as best may be. (Note by Ursus on the margin of the wall.)

A lord never takes an oath, either to the crown or the law. His word suffices; he says, "Upon my honour."

By a law of Edward the Sixth, peers have the privilege of committing manslaughter. A peer who kills a man without premeditation is not prosecuted.

The persons of peers are inviolable. A peer cannot be held in durance, save in the Tower of London. A writ of supplicavit cannot be granted against a peer. A peer sent for by the king has the right to kill one or two deer in the royal park. A peer holds in his castle a baron's court of justice. It is unworthy of a peer to walk the street in a cloak, followed by two footmen; he should only show himself attended by a great train of gentlemen of his household. A peer can be amerced only by his peers, and never to any greater amount than five pounds, excepting in the case of a duke, who can be amerced ten. A peer may retain six aliens born, any other Englishman but four. A peer can have wine custom-free; an earl eight tuns. A peer is alone exempt from presenting himself before the sheriff of the circuit. A peer cannot be assessed towards the militia. When it pleases a peer he raises a regiment and gives it to the king; thus have done their graces the Dukes of Athol, Hamilton, and Northumberland. A peer can hold only of a peer; in a civil cause he can demand the adjournment of the case, if there be not at least one knight on the jury. A peer nominates his own chaplains; a baron appoints three chaplains, a viscount four, an earl and a marquis five, a duke six. A peer cannot be put to the rack, even for high treason. A peer cannot be branded on the hand. A peer is a clerk, though he knows not how to read; in law he knows.

A duke has a right to a canopy, or cloth of state, in all places where the king is not present; a viscount may have one in his house; a baron has a cover of assay, which may be held under his cup while he drinks. A baroness has the right to have her train borne by a man in the presence of a viscountess.

Eighty-six tables, with five hundred dishes, are served every day in the royal palace at each meal.

If a plebeian strike a lord, his hand is cut off.

A lord is very nearly a king; the king is very nearly a god.

The earth is a lordship.

The English address God as "my lord!"

Opposite this writing was written a second one, in the same fashion, which ran thus:—

Satisfaction which must Suffice those who have Nothing.

Henry Auverquerque, Earl of Grantham, who sits in the House of Lords between the Earl of Jersey and the Earl of Greenwich, has a hundred thousand a year. To his lordship belongs the palace of Grantham Terrace, built all of marble and famous for what is called the labyrinth of passages,—a curiosity which contains the scarlet corridor in marble of Sarancolin; the brown corridor in lumachel of Astracan; the white corridor in marble of Lani; the black corridor in marble of Alabanda; the grey corridor in marble of Staremma; the yellow corridor in marble of Hesse; the green corridor in marble of the Tyrol; the red corridor, half cherry-spotted marble of Bohemia, half lumachel of Cordova; the blue corridor in turquin of Genoa; the violet corridor in granite of Catalonia; the mourning-hued corridor veined black and white in slate of Murviedro; the pink corridor in cipolin of the Alps; the pearl corridor in lumachel of Nonetta; and the corridor of all colours, called "the courtiers' corridor," in motley.

Richard Lowther, Viscount Lonsdale, owns Lowther in Westmoreland, which has a magnificent approach, and a flight of entrance steps which seems to invite the ingress of kings.

Richard, Earl of Scarborough, Viscount and Baron Lumley of Lumley Castle, Viscount Lumley of Waterford in Ireland, and Lord Lieutenant and Vice-Admiral of the county of Northumberland and of Durham, both city and county, owns the

double castleward of old and new Sandbeck, where you admire a superb railing, in the form of a semicircle, surrounding the basin of a matchless fountain. He has, besides, his castle of Lumley.

Robert Darcy, Earl of Holderness, has his domain of Holderness, with baronial towers, and large gardens laid out in French fashion, where he drives in his coach-and-six, preceded by two outriders, as becomes a peer of England.

Charles Beauclerc, Duke of St. Alban's, Earl of Burford, Baron Heddington, Grand Falconer of England, has an abode at Windsor, regal even in comparison with the king's.

Charles Bodville Robartes, Baron Robartes of Truro, Viscount Bodmin and Earl of Radnor, owns Wimpole in Cambridgeshire, which is really three palaces in one, having three façades, one bowed and two triangular. The approach is by an avenue of trees four deep.

The most noble and most puissant Lord Philip, Baron Herbert of Cardiff, Earl of Montgomery and of Pembroke, Ross of Kendall, Parr, Fitzhugh, Marmion, St. Quentin, and Herbert of Shurland, Warden of the Stannaries in the counties of Cornwall and Devon, hereditary visitor of Jesus College, possesses the wonderful gardens at Wilton, where there are two sheaf-like fountains, finer than those of his most Christian Majesty King Louis XIV. at Versailles.

Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, owns Somerset House on the Thames, which is equal to the Villa Pamphili at Rome. On the chimney-piece are seen two porcelain vases of the dynasty of Yuen, which are worth half a million in French money.

In Yorkshire, Arthur, Lord Ingram, Viscount Irwin, has Temple Newsam, which is entered under a triumphal arch, and which has large wide roofs resembling Moorish terraces.

Robert, Lord Ferrers of Chartly, Bourchier and Louvaine, has Staunton Harold in Leicestershire, of which the park is geometrically planned in the shape of a temple with a façade, and in front of the piece of water is the great church with the square belfry, which belongs to his lordship.

In the county of Northampton, Charles Spencer, Earl of

Sunderland, member of His Majesty's Privy Council, possesses Althorp, at the entrance of which is a railing with four columns surmounted by groups in marble.

Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, has, in Surrey, New Park, rendered magnificent by its sculptured pinnacles, its circular lawn belted by trees, and its woodland, at the extremity of which is a little mountain, artistically rounded, and surmounted by a large oak, which can be seen from afar.

Philip Stanhope, Earl of Chesterfield, possesses Bretby Hall in Derbyshire, with a splendid clock tower, falconries, warrens, and very fine sheets of water, long, square, and oval, one of which is shaped like a mirror, and has two jets, which throw the water to a great height.

Charles Cornwallis, Baron Cornwallis of Eye, owns Broome Hall, a palace of the fourteenth century.

The most noble Algernon Capel, Viscount Malden, Earl of Essex, has Cashiobury in Hertfordshire, a country-seat which is in the shape of a capital H, and which rejoices sportsmen with its abundance of game.

Charles, Lord Ossulston, owns Darnley in Middlesex, approached by Italian gardens.

James Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, has, seven leagues from London, Hatfield House, with its four lordly pavilions, its belfry in the centre, and its grand courtyard of black and white slabs, like that of St. Germain. This palace, which has a frontage two hundred and seventy-two feet in length, was built in the reign of James I. by the Lord High Treasurer of England, the great-grandfather of the present earl. To be seen there is the bed of one of the Countesses of Salisbury; it is of inestimable value and made entirely of Brazilian wood, which is a panacea against the bites of serpents, and which is called *milhombres*, that is to say "a thousand men." On this bed is inscribed, *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*

Edward Rich, Earl of Warwick and Holland, is owner of Warwick Castle, where whole oaks are burnt in the fireplaces.

In the parish of Sevenoaks, Charles Sackville, Baron Buckhurst, Baron Cranfield, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex,

is owner of Knowle, which is as large as a town and is composed of three palaces standing parallel one behind the other, like ranks of infantry. There are six gables in steps on the principal frontage, and a gate under a keep with four towers.

Thomas Thynne, Baron Thynne of Warminster, and Viscount Weymouth, possesses Longleat, in which there are as many chimneys, cupolas, pinnacles, pavilions, and turrets, as at Chambord, in France, which belongs to the king.

Henry Howard, Earl of Suffolk, owns, twelve leagues from London, the palace of Audley End in Essex, which in grandeur and dignity scarcely yields the palm to the Escurial of the King of Spain.

In Bedfordshire, Wrest House and Park, which is a whole district, enclosed by ditches, walls, woodlands, rivers, and hills, belongs to Henry, Marquis of Kent.

Hampton Court, in Herefordshire, with its strong embattled keep, and its gardens bounded by a piece of water which divides them from the forest, belongs to Thomas, Lord Coningsby.

Grimsthorp, in Lincolnshire,— with its long façade broken by turrets; its park, its fish-ponds, its pheasantries, its sheep-folds, its lawns; its grounds planted with rows of trees; its groves, its walks, its shrubberies; its flower-beds and borders, formed in square and lozenge-shape, and resembling great carpets; its race-courses, and the majestic sweep for carriages to turn in at the entrance of the house,— belongs to Robert, Earl Lindsey, hereditary lord of the forest of Waltham.

Up Park, in Sussex, a square house, with two symmetrical belfried pavilions on each side of the great courtyard, belongs to the Right Honourable Forde, Baron Grey of Werke, Viscount Glendale and Earl of Tankerville.

Newnham Paddox, in Warwickshire, which has two quadrangular fish-ponds and a gabled archway with a large window of four panes, belongs to the Earl of Denbigh, who is also Count von Rheinfelden, in Germany.

Wytham Abbey, in Berkshire, with its French garden in which there are four curiously trimmed arbors, and its great embattled towers supported by two bastions, belongs to Mon-

tague, Earl of Abingdon, who also owns Rycote, of which he is Baron, and the principal door of which bears the device *Virtus ariete fortior.*

William Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, has six dwelling-places, of which Chatsworth (two-storied, and of the finest order of Grecian architecture) is one.

The Viscount of Kinalmeaky, who is Earl of Cork, in Ireland, is owner of Burlington House, Piccadilly, with its extensive gardens, reaching to the fields outside London; he is also owner of Chiswick, where there are nine magnificent *corps de logis;* he also owns Londesborough, which is a new house by the side of an old palace.

The Duke of Beaufort owns Chelsea, which contains two Gothic buildings, and a Florentine one; he has also Badminton, in Gloucestershire, a residence from which a number of avenues branch out like rays from a star. The most noble and puissant prince Henry, Duke of Beaufort, is also Marquis and Earl of Worcester, Earl of Glamorgan, Viscount Grosmont, and Baron Herbert of Chepstow, Ragland, and Gower, Baron Beaufort of Caldecott Castle, and Baron de Bottetourt.

John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, and Marquis of Clare, owns Bolsover, with its majestic square keeps; his also, is Haughton, in Nottinghamshire, where a round pyramid, made to imitate the Tower of Babel, stands in the centre of a basin of water.

William, Earl of Craven, Viscount Uffington, and Baron Craven of Hamstead Marshall, owns Combe Abbey in Warwickshire, where is to be seen the finest water-jet in England; and in Berkshire two baronies, Hamstead Marshall, on the façade of which are five Gothic lanterns sunk in the wall, and Ashdown Park, which is a country-seat situate at the point of intersection of cross-roads in the forest.

Linnæus, Lord Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, derives his title from the Castle of Clancharlie, built in 912 by Edward the Elder, as a defence against the Danes. Besides Hunkerville House, in London, which is a palace, he has Corleone Lodge at

Windsor, which is another, and eight castlewards, one at Burton-on-Trent, with a royalty on the carriage of plaster of Paris; then Grumdaith, Humble, Moricambe, Trewardraith, Hell-Kesters (where there is a miraculous well), Phillinmore, with its turf bogs, Reculver, near the ancient city Vagniac, Vinecaunton, on the Moel-eulle Mountain; besides nineteen boroughs and villages with reeves, and the whole of Penneth chase, all of which bring his lordship 40,000*l.* a year.

The one hundred and seventy-two peers enjoying their dignities under James II. possess among them altogether a revenue of 1,272,000*l.* sterling a year, which is the eleventh part of the revenue of England.

In the margin, opposite the last name (that of Linnæus, Lord Clancharlie), there was a note in the handwriting of Ursus:—

"Rebel; in exile; houses, lands, and chattels sequestrated. It is well."

IV.

Ursus admired Homo. One admires one's counterpart. That is a universal law.

To be always raging inwardly and grumbling outwardly was the normal condition of Ursus. He was the malcontent of creation. By nature he was a man ever in opposition. He took the world unkindly; he gave his approval to no one and to nothing. The bee did not atone for its sting by its honey-making; a full-blown rose did not absolve the sun for yellow fever and black vomit. It is probable that in secret Ursus criticised Providence a good deal. "Evidently," he would say, "the devil works by a spring, and the mistake that God made is having let go the trigger." He approved of none but princes, and he had his own peculiar way of

expressing his approbation. One day, when James II. made a gift to the Virgin in a Catholic chapel in Ireland of a massive gold lamp, Ursus, passing that way with Homo, who was more indifferent to such things, burst into loud exclamations of admiration before the crowd, and exclaimed: "It is certain that the blessed Virgin needs a lamp much more than those barefooted children there need shoes."

Such proofs of his loyalty and such evidences of his respect for established powers probably contributed in no small degree to make the magistrates tolerate his vagabond life and his disreputable alliance with a wolf. Sometimes of an evening, through friendly weakness, he allowed Homo to stretch his limbs and wander about. The wolf was incapable of an abuse of confidence, and behaved in society, that is to say among men, with all the meekness of a poodle. All the same, if bad-tempered officials had to be dealt with, difficulties might arise; so Ursus kept the honest wolf chained up as much as possible.

From a political point of view his writing about gold, not very intelligible in itself, and now become undecipherable, was but a smear, and gave no handle to the enemy. Even after the time of James II., and under the "respectable" reign of William and Mary, his caravan might have been seen peacefully going its rounds of the little English country towns. He travelled freely from one end of Great Britain to the other, selling his philtres, and phials, and performing, with the assistance of his wolf, his quack mummeries; and he passed with ease through the meshes of the nets which the police of that period had spread all over England in order to catch wandering gangs, and especially to stop the progress of the Comprachicos.

This was right enough. Ursus belonged to no gang.

Ursus lived with Ursus, a *tête-à-tête,* into which the wolf gently thrust his nose. If Ursus could have had his way, he would have been a Caribbee; that being impossible, he preferred to be alone. The solitary man is a modified savage, accepted by civilization. He who wanders most is most alone; hence his continual change of place. To remain anywhere long, suffocated him with the sense of being tamed. He spent his life in moving on. The sight of towns increased his taste for brambles, thickets, thorns, and caves. His home was the forest. He did not feel much out of his element in the murmur of crowded streets, which is so like the rustling of trees. The crowd to some extent satisfies our taste for the desert. What he disliked most in his van was its having a door and windows, and thus resembling a house. He would have realized his ideal had he been able to put a cave on four wheels and travel in a den.

Ursus did not smile, as we have already said, but he used to laugh, — sometimes, indeed frequently, a bitter laugh. There is consent in a smile, while a laugh is often a refusal. His chief business was to hate the human race. He was implacable in this hatred. Having satisfied himself that human life is a dreadful thing; having observed the superposition of evils, — kings on the people, war on kings, the plague on war, famine on the plague, folly on everything; having proved a certain degree of chastisement in the mere fact of existence; having recognized that death is a deliverance, — when they brought him a sick man he cured him; and he had cordials and beverages to prolong the lives of the old. He put lame cripples on their legs again, and hurled this sarcasm at them: "There, you are on your paws once more; may you walk long in this vale of tears!" When he saw a poor man dying of hunger, he gave him

all the pence he had about him, growling out: "Live on, you wretch! eat! last a long time! It is not I who would shorten your penal servitude." After which, he would rub his hands and say, "I do men all the harm I can."

Through the little window at the back, passers-by could read on the ceiling of the van these words, written within in big letters, but visible from without, — "URSUS, PHILOSOPHER."

II.

THE COMPRACHICOS.

I.

WHO ever hears the word "Comprachicos" now, and who knows its meaning?

The Comprachicos, or Comprapequeños, were a hideous and nondescript association of wanderers, famous in the seventeenth century, forgotten in the eighteenth, unheard of in the nineteenth. The Comprachicos are like the "succession powder," an ancient social characteristic detail. They are part of old human ugliness. To the great eye of history, which sees everything collectively, the Comprachicos are closely connected with the colossal evil of slavery. Joseph sold by his brethren is one chapter in their history. The Comprachicos have left their traces in the penal laws of Spain and England. You find here and there in the dark confusion of English laws the impress of this horrible truth, like the footprint of a savage in a forest.

Comprachicos, the same as Comprapequeños, is a compound Spanish word signifying "Child-buyers." The Comprachicos traded in children. They bought and sold them. They did not steal them; the kidnapping of children is another branch of industry. And what did they make of these children? Monsters. Why monsters? To laugh at. The populace must needs laugh; and kings too. The mountebank is wanted in the

streets; the jester at the Louvre. The first is called a Clown; the other, a Fool. The efforts of man to provide himself with amusement are at times worthy of the attention of the philosopher.

What are we sketching in these few preliminary pages? A chapter in the most terrible of books,— a book which might be entitled, "The Farming of the Unhappy by the Happy."

II.

A CHILD destined to be a plaything for men, — such a thing has existed; such a thing exists even now. In simple and savage times such a thing constituted a special trade. The seventeenth century, called the great century, was of those times. It was a century very Byzantine in tone. It combined corrupt simplicity with delicate ferocity, — a curious variety of civilization; a tiger with a simper. Madame de Sévigné minces on the subject of the fagot and the wheel. That century traded a good deal in children. Flattering historians have concealed the sore, but have divulged the remedy, — Vincent de Paul.

In order that a human toy should prove a success, he must be taken in hand early. The dwarf must be fashioned when young. We play with childhood. But a well-formed child is not very amusing; a hunchback is better fun.

Hence grew an art. There were trainers who took a man and made him an abortion; they took a face and made a muzzle; they stunted growth; they distorted the features. The artificial production of teratological cases had its rules. It was quite a science; what one can imagine as the antithesis of orthopedy. Where God had

put a look, their art put a squint; where God had made harmony, they made discord; where God had made a perfect picture, they made a caricature; and in the eyes of connoisseurs it was the caricature that was perfect. They debased animals as well; they invented piebald horses. Turenne rode a piebald horse. In our own days do we not dye dogs blue and green? Nature is our canvas. Man has always wished to add something to God's work. Man retouches creation, sometimes for better, sometimes for worse. The Court buffoon was nothing but an attempt to lead man back to the monkey. It was a move in the wrong direction; a masterpiece in retrogression. At the same time they tried to make a man of the monkey. Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland and Countess of Southampton, had a marmoset for a page. Frances Sutton, Baroness Dudley, eighth peeress in the bench of barons, had tea served by a baboon clad in gold brocade, which her ladyship called My Black. Catherine Sedley, Countess of Dorchester used to go and take her seat in parliament in a coach with armorial bearings, behind which stood, with muzzles high up in the air, three Cape monkeys in grand livery. A Duchess of Medina-Celi, at whose toilet Cardinal Pole assisted, had her stockings put on by an ourang-outang. These monkeys thus raised in the social scale were a counterpoise to men brutalized and bestialized. This promiscuousness of man and beast, desired by the great, was especially prominent in the case of the dwarf and the dog. The dwarf never quitted the dog, which was always bigger than himself; the dog was the pair of the dwarf, — it was as if they were coupled with a collar. This juxtaposition is authenticated by a mass of historic records; and notably by the portrait of Jeffrey Hudson, dwarf of Henrietta of France, daughter of Henri IV., and wife of Charles I.

To degrade man tends to deform him. The degradation of his condition was completed by disfigurement. Certain vivisectors of that period succeeded marvellously well in effacing from the human face the divine effigy. Doctor Conquest, member of the Amen-street College, and judicial visitor of the chemists' shops of London, wrote a book in Latin on this pseudo-surgery, the processes of which he describes. If we are to believe Justus of Carrickfergus, the inventor of this branch of surgery was a monk named Avonmore, — an Irish word signifying Great River.

The dwarf of the Elector Palatine, Perkeo, whose effigy (or ghost) springs from a magical box in the cave of Heidelberg, was a remarkable specimen of this science, which was very varied in its applications. It fashioned beings the law of whose existence was hideously simple; it permitted them to suffer, and commanded them to amuse.

III.

The manufacture of monstrosities was practised on a large scale, and comprised various branches. The Sultan wanted them; so did the Pope, — the one to guard his women, the other to say his prayers. These were of a peculiar kind, incapable of reproduction. Scarcely human beings, they were useful to voluptuousness and to religion. The seraglio and the Sistine Chapel utilized the same species of monsters; fierce in the former case, mild in the latter.

They knew how to produce things in those days which are not produced now; they had talents which we lack, and it is not without reason that some good folk cry out that the decline has come. We no longer know how to

sculpture living human flesh; this is consequent on the loss of the art of torture. Men were once virtuosos in that respect, but are so no longer; the art has become so simplified that it will soon disappear altogether. In cutting off the limbs of living men, in opening their bellies and dragging out their entrails, phenomena were grasped on the moment and discoveries made. We are obliged to renounce these experiments now, and are thus deprived of the progress which surgery made by the aid of the executioner.

The vivisection of former days was not limited to the manufacture of phenomena for the market-place, of buffoons for the palace, and eunuchs for sultans and popes. It abounded in varieties. One of its triumphs was the manufacture of cocks for the King of England.

It was the custom, in the palace of the kings of England, to have a sort of watchman who crowed like a cock. This watcher, awake while all others slept, ranged the palace, and raised from hour to hour the cry of the farmyard, repeating it as often as was necessary, and thus supplying the place of a clock. This man had in childhood undergone an operation of the pharynx, which was part of the art described by Dr. Conquest. Under Charles II. the salivation caused by the operation having disgusted the Duchess of Portsmouth, the appointment was indeed preserved, so that the splendour of the crown should not be impaired; but they got an unmutilated man to represent the cock. A retired officer was generally selected for this honourable employment. Under James II. the functionary was named William Sampson, Cock, and received for his crow 9*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* annually.[1] The memoirs of Catherine II. inform us that at St. Petersburg, scarcely a hundred years since,

[1] See Chamberlayne's "Present State of England," part i. chap. xiii., p. 179. 1688.

whenever the czar or czarina was displeased with a Russian prince, he was forced to squat down in the great ante-chamber of the palace, and to remain in that posture a certain number of days, mewing like a cat or clucking like a sitting hen, and pecking his food from the floor. These fashions have passed away; but not so much, perhaps, as one might imagine. Nowadays, courtiers slightly modify their intonation in clucking to please their masters. More than one picks up from the ground — we will not say from the mud — what he eats.

It is very fortunate that kings cannot err. Hence their contradictions never perplex us. In approving always, one is sure to be always right, — which is pleasant. Louis XIV. would not have liked to see at Versailles either an officer acting the cock, or a prince acting the turkey. That which enhanced the royal and imperial dignity in England and Russia would have seemed to Louis the Great incompatible with the crown of St. Louis. We know how intense was his displeasure when Madame Henriette forgot herself so far as to see a hen in a dream, — which was, indeed, a grave breach of good manners in a lady of the Court. When one is of the Court, one should not dream of the courtyard. Bossuet, it may be remembered, was nearly as much scandalized as Louis XIV.

IV.

The traffic in children in the seventeenth century, as we have already explained, was connected with a trade. The Comprachicos engaged in the traffic and carried on the trade. They bought children, worked a little on the raw material, and re-sold them afterwards.

The vendors were of all kinds, — from the wretched father, getting rid of his family, to the master, utilizing

his stud of slaves. The sale of men was a simple matter. In our own time we have had fighting to maintain this right. Remember that it is less than a century ago that the Elector of Hesse sold his subjects to the King of England, who required men to be killed in America. Kings went to the Elector of Hesse as we go to the butcher to buy meat. The Elector had food for powder in stock, and hung up his subjects in his shop: "Come, buy! they are for sale!" In England, under Jefferies, after the tragical episode of Monmouth, there were many lords and gentlemen beheaded and quartered. Those who were executed left wives and daughters, widows and orphans, whom James II. gave to the queen, his wife; the queen sold these ladies to William Penn. Very likely the king had so much per cent on the transaction. The extraordinary thing is, not that James II. should have sold the women, but that William Penn should have bought them. Penn's purchase is excused, or explained, by the fact that having a wilderness to sow with men, he needed women as farming implements. Her Gracious Majesty made a handsome sum out of these ladies. The young sold dear. We can imagine, with the uneasy feeling which a complicated scandal arouses, that probably some old duchesses were thrown in cheap.

The Comprachicos were also called the Cheylas, — a Hindoo word, which conveys the idea of harrying a nest. For a long time the Comprachicos made only a pretence of concealing themselves. There is sometimes a favouring shadow thrown over iniquitous trades, in which they thrive. In our own day we have seen an association of this kind in Spain, under the direction of the ruffian Ramon Selles, continue from 1834 to 1866, and keep three provinces in terror for thirty years, — Valencia, Alicante, and Murcia. Under the Stuarts, the Com-

prachicos were by no means in bad odour at Court. On occasions they were used for reasons of State. For James II. they were almost an *instrumentum regni*. It was a time when families, which were refractory or in the way, were dismembered; when a descent was cut short; when heirs were suddenly suppressed. At times one branch was defrauded for the profit of another. The Comprachicos had a genius for disfigurement which recommended them to State policy. To disfigure is better than to kill. There was, indeed, the Iron Mask, but that was a dangerous measure. Europe could not be peopled with iron masks, while deformed mountebanks ran about the streets without creating any surprise. Besides, the iron mask is removable; not so the mask of flesh. You are masked forever by your own flesh: what can be more ingenious?

The Comprachicos worked on man as the Chinese work on trees. They had their secrets, as we have said; they had tricks which are now lost arts. A sort of fantastic stunted thing left their hands; it was ridiculous and wonderful. They could touch up a little being with such skill that its father would not have recognized it. Sometimes they left the spine straight and remade the face. Children destined for tumblers had their joints dislocated in a masterly manner; you would have said they had been boned. Thus gymnasts were made. The Comprachicos not only deprived a child of his natural lineaments, not only took away his face from the child, but they also took away his memory. At least they took away all they could of it; the child had no consciousness of the mutilation to which he had been subjected. The frightful operation left its traces on his countenance, but not on his mind. The most he could recall was that one day he had been seized by men; that next he had fallen asleep; and then that he had been

cured. Cured of what, he did not know. Of burnings with sulphur and incisions with the iron he remembered nothing. The Comprachicos deadened the little patient by means of a stupefying powder which was thought to be magical, and which suppressed all pain. This powder has been known from time immemorial in China, and is still employed there. The Chinese have been in advance of us in all our inventions, — printing, artillery, aërostation, chloroform. The difference is that the discovery which at once takes life in Europe and becomes a prodigy and a wonder, in China remains a chrysalis and is preserved in a deathlike state. China is a museum of embryos.

As we are in China, let us linger a moment to note another peculiarity. In China, from time immemorial, they have displayed a marvellous refinement in industry and art. It is the art of moulding a living man. They take a child two or three years old, put him in a more or less grotesque porcelain vase, which is made without top or bottom to allow egress for the head and feet. During the day the vase is set upright, and at night is laid down to allow the child to sleep. Thus the child thickens without growing taller, filling up with his compressed flesh and distorted bones the depressions in the vase. This development in a bottle continues many years. After a certain time it becomes irreparable. When they consider that this is accomplished, and the monster made, they break the vase. The child comes out, — and, behold, there is a man in the shape of a mug!

This is convenient; by ordering your dwarf betimes you are able to have him of any shape you wish.

V.

James II. tolerated the Comprachicos for the very good reason that he found them useful; at least it happened that he did so more than once.

We do not always disdain to use what we despise. This low trade, an excellent substitute sometimes for the higher one which is called State policy, was censured but not persecuted. There was no surveillance, but a certain amount of attention. Sometimes the king went so far as to avow his complicity; such is the audacity of monarchical terrorism. The disfigured one was marked with the *fleur-de-lis;* they took from him the mark of God, and put on him the mark of the king. Jacob Astley, knight and baronet, lord of Melton Constable, in the county of Norfolk, had in his family a child who had been sold, upon whose forehead the dealer had branded a *fleur-de-lis* with a hot iron. In certain cases in which it was considered desirable to record for some reason the royal origin of the new position made for the child, they used such means. England has always done us the honour to utilize the *fleur-de-lis* for her personal use.

The Comprachicos, allowing for the shade of difference which distinguishes a trade from a fanaticism, were analogous to the Stranglers of India. They lived in gangs, and to facilitate their operations affected somewhat of the Merry-Andrew. They encamped here and there, but were grave and religious, bearing no affinity to other nomads, and were incapable of theft. The people for a long time wrongly confounded them with the Moors of Spain and the Moors of China. The Moors of Spain were counterfeiters; the Moors of China were thieves. There was nothing of the sort about the Com-

prachicos; they were honest folk. Whatever you may think of them, they were sometimes sincerely scrupulous. They pushed open a door, entered, bargained for a child, paid, and departed. All was done with propriety.

They were of all nationalities. English, French, Castilians, Germans, Italians fraternized under the name of Comprachicos. A unity of idea, a unity of superstition, and the pursuit of the same calling make such fusions. In this roving fraternity those of the Mediterranean seaboard represented the East, those of the Atlantic seaboard the West. Many Basques held converse with many Irishmen. The Basque and the Irishman understand each other, they speak the old Punic jargon; add to this the intimate relations of Catholic Ireland with Catholic Spain, — relations such that they resulted in bringing to the gallows in London one who was almost King of Ireland, the Celtic Lord de Brany.

The Comprachicos were rather a fellowship than a tribe; rather a residuum than a fellowship. They were all the riff-raff of the universe, having a crime for their trade. They were a sort of harlequin people, all composed of rags. To gain a recruit was to sew on another tatter. To appear and disappear, to wander about, was the Comprachicos' law of existence. What is barely tolerated cannot take root. Even in kingdoms where their business supplied the Courts, and occasionally served as an auxiliary to the royal power, they were often ill-treated. Kings made use of their art and then sent the artists to the galleys. These inconsistencies belong to the ebb and flow of royal caprice, — "For such is our good will and pleasure."

A rolling stone and a roving trade gather no moss. The Comprachicos were poor. They might have said

what the lean and ragged witch said, when she saw them setting fire to the stake: "Le jeu n'en vaut pas la chandelle." It is possible, nay probable (their chiefs remaining unknown), that the wholesale contractors in the trade were rich. After the lapse of two centuries it would be difficult to throw any light on this point.

They were, as we have said, a fellowship. They had their laws, their oaths, their formulæ, — almost their cabala. Any one nowadays wishing to know all about the Comprachicos, need only go into Biscaya or Galicia; there were many Basques among them, and it is in those mountains that one hears their history. To this day the Comprachicos are spoken of at Oyarzun, at Urbistondo, at Leso, at Astigarraga. "Aguardate niño, que voy a llamar al Comprachicos" (Take care, child, or I'll call the Comprachicos) is the cry with which mothers frighten their children in that country.

The Comprachicos, like the Zigeuner and the Gipsies, had appointed places for periodical meetings. Their leaders conferred together from time to time. In the seventeenth century they had four principal points of rendezvous, — one, the pass of Pancorbo in Spain; one, the glade called the Wicked Woman, near Diekirsch, in Germany, where there are two strange bas-reliefs, representing a woman with a head and a man without one; one in France, the hill where the colossal statue of Massue-la-Promesse stood in the old sacred wood of Borvo Tomona, near Bourbonne les Bains; and one in England, behind the garden wall of William Challoner, Squire of Gisborough in Cleveland, Yorkshire.

VI.

THE laws against vagabonds have always been very rigorous in England. In her Gothic legislation England seemed to be inspired with this principle, *Homo errans fera errante pejor.* One of the special statutes classifies the man without a home as "more dangerous than the asp, dragon, lynx, or basilisk" (*atrocior aspide, draconc, lyncc, et basilico*). For a long time England troubled herself as much concerning the Gipsies, of whom she wished to be rid, as about the wolves of which she had been cleared. In that the Englishman differed from the Irishman, who prayed to the saints for the health of the wolf, and called him "my god-father."

Nevertheless, in the same way that English law (as we have just seen) tolerated the wolf, which was tamed, domesticated, and become in some sort a dog, so it tolerated the regular vagabond, become in some sort a subject. It did not trouble itself about either the mountebank or the travelling barber, the quack doctor, the peddler, or the open-air scholar, as long as they had a trade to live by. Further than this, and with these exceptions, the kind of freedom which exists in the wanderer terrified the law. A tramp was a possible public enemy. That modern thing, the loafer, was then unknown; that ancient thing, the vagrant, was alone understood. A suspicious appearance, that indescribable something which all understand and none can define, was sufficient reason why society should seize a man by the collar and demand, "Where do you live? How do you get your living?" And if he could not answer, harsh penalties awaited him. Iron and fire were in the code: the law practised the cauterization of vagrancy. Hence, throughout English territory a veritable *loi des suspects* was

applicable to vagrants (who, it must be owned, readily became malefactors), and particularly to Gipsies, whose expulsion has erroneously been compared to the expulsion of the Jews and the Moors from Spain, and the Protestants from France. As for us, we do not confound a *battue* with a persecution.

The Comprachicos, we insist, had nothing in common with the Gipsies. The Gipsies were a nation; the Comprachicos were a compound of all nations, — the lees of a horrible vessel full of filthy waters. The Comprachicos had not, like the Gipsies a vernacular of their own; their jargon was a promiscuous collection of idioms; all languages were mixed together in their language; they spoke a medley. Like the Gipsies, they had come to be a people winding through the peoples; but their common tie was association, not race. At all epochs in history one finds in the vast liquid mass which constitutes humanity some of these streams of venomous men exuding poison around them. The Gipsies were a tribe; the Comprachicos, a freemasonry, — a masonry having not a noble aim, but a hideous handicraft. Finally, their religions differed: the Gipsies were Pagans; the Comprachicos were Christians, and more than that, good Christians, as became an association which, although a mixture of all nations, owed its birth to Spain, a devout land. They were more than Christians, they were Catholics; they were more than Catholics, they were Romanists; and they were so devoted in their faith, and so pure, that they refused to associate with the Hungarian nomads of the comitat of Pesth, commanded and led by an old man, having for sceptre a wand with a silver ball, surmounted by the double-headed Austrian eagle. It is true that these Hungarians were schismatics, to the extent of celebrating the Assumption on the 29th of August, which is an abomination.

In England, so long as the Stuarts reigned, the confederation of the Comprachicos was (for motives of which we have already given a glimpse) to a certain extent protected. James II., a devout man, who persecuted the Jews and trampled out the Gipsies, was a good prince to the Comprachicos. We have seen why. The Comprachicos were buyers of the human wares in which he was a dealer. They excelled in disappearances. Disappearances are occasionally necessary for the good of the State. An inconvenient heir of tender age whom they took in hand lost his original shape. This facilitated confiscation; the transfer of titles to favourites was simplified. The Comprachicos were, moreover, very discreet, and very taciturn. They bound themselves to silence and kept their word, which is very necessary in affairs of State. There is scarcely an instance of their having betrayed the secrets of the king. This was, it is true, greatly to their interest; for if the king had lost confidence in them, they would have been in great danger. They were thus of use in a political point of view. Moreover, these artists furnished singers for the Holy Father. The Comprachicos were useful for the "Miserere" of Allegri. They were particularly devoted to the Virgin Mary. All this pleased the Stuarts. James II. could not be hostile to men who carried their devotion to the Virgin to the extent of manufacturing eunuchs. In 1688 there was a change of dynasty in England: Orange supplanted Stuart; William III. replaced James II.

James II. went away to die in exile; miracles were performed on his tomb, and his relics cured the Bishop of Autun of fistula, — a worthy recompense for the Christian virtues of the prince.

William, having neither the same ideas nor the same practices as James, was severe to the Comprachicos. He did his best to crush out the vermin. A statute of the

early part of William and Mary's reign hit the association of child-buyers hard. It was as the blow of a club to the Comprachicos, who were from that time pulverized. By the terms of this statute, those of the fellowship taken and duly convicted were to be branded with a red-hot iron, imprinting "R" on the shoulder, signifying rogue; on the left hand "T," signifying thief; and on the right hand "M," signifying man-slayer. The chiefs, "supposed to be rich, although beggars in appearance," were to be punished in the *collistrigium*, that is, the pillory,— and branded on the forehead with a "P," besides having their goods confiscated and the trees in their woods rooted up. Those who did not inform against the Comprachicos were to be punished by confiscation and imprisonment for life, as for the crime of misprision. As for the women found among these men, they were to be punished by the cucking-stool. This is a sort of see-saw, the name of which is derived from the French word *coquine*, and the German *stuhl*. English law being endowed with remarkable longevity, this punishment for quarrelsome women still exists in English legislation. The cucking-stool is suspended over a river or a pond; the woman is seated upon it. The chair is then allowed to drop into the water, and then pulled out. This dipping of the woman is repeated three times, "to cool her anger," says the commentator, Chamberlayne.

BOOK I.

NIGHT NOT SO BLACK AS MAN.

CHAPTER I.

PORTLAND BILL.

A STRONG north wind blew continuously over the mainland of Europe, and yet more roughly over England, during the entire month of December, 1689, and also the month of January, 1690. Hence the terrible cold weather which caused that winter to be noted as "memorable to the poor" on the margin of the old Bible in the Presbyterian chapel of the Non-jurors in London. Thanks to the lasting qualities of the old monarchical parchment employed in official registers, long lists of poor persons, found dead of famine and cold, are still legible in many local repositories, — particularly in the archives of the Liberty of the Clink, in the borough of Southwark, of Pie Powder Court (which signifies Dusty Feet Court), and in those of Whitechapel Court, held in the village of Stepney by the bailiff of the Lord of the Manor. The Thames was frozen over, — a thing which does not happen once in a century, as ice forms on it with difficulty owing to the action of the sea. Coaches rolled over the frozen river, and a fair was held upon it with booths, bear-baiting and bull-baiting.

An ox was roasted whole on the ice. This thick ice lasted two months. The year 1690 exceeded in severity even the famous winters at the beginning of the seventeenth century so minutely observed by Dr. Gideon Delane, — the same who was, in his quality of apothecary to King James, honoured by the city of London with a bust and a pedestal.

One evening, towards the close of one of the most bitter days of the month of January, 1690, something unusual was going on in one of the numerous inhospitable coves of the Bay of Portland, which caused the sea-gulls and wild geese to scream and circle round its mouth, not daring to re-enter. In this cove, the most dangerous of all which line the bay during the continuance of certain winds, and consequently the most lonely (well suited, by reason of its very danger, for ships in hiding), a little vessel, almost touching the cliff, so deep was the water, was moored to a point of rock. We are wrong in saying, "The night falls;" we should say "The night rises," for it is from the earth that darkness comes. It was already night at the bottom of the cliff; it was still day at the top. Any one approaching the vessel's moorings would have recognized a Biscayan hooker. The sun, concealed all day by the mist, had just set. That deep and sombre melancholy which might be called longing for the absent sun already pervaded the scene. As there was no breeze from the sea, the water of the creek was calm. This was, especially in winter, a lucky exception. Almost all the Portland creeks have sand-bars; and in heavy weather the sea becomes very rough, and, to pass in safety, much skill and practice are necessary. These little ports (ports more in appearance than fact) are of small advantage. They are hazardous to enter, dangerous to leave. This evening, for a wonder, there was no danger.

The Biscay hooker is of an ancient model, now fallen into disuse. This kind of craft, which has done service even in the navy, was stoutly built in its hull, — a boat in size, a ship in strength. It figured in the Armada. Sometimes the war-hooker attained to a high tonnage; thus the "Great Griffin," bearing a captain's flag, and commanded by Lopez de Medina, measured six hundred and fifty good tons, and carried forty guns. But the merchant and contraband hookers were very feeble specimens. Sea-folk held them at their true value, and considered the model a very sorry one. The rigging of the hooker was made of hemp, sometimes with wire inside, which was probably intended as a means, however unscientific, of obtaining indications, in the case of magnetic tension. The lightness of this rigging did not exclude the use of heavy tackle, the *cabrias* of the Spanish galleon, and the *cameli* of the Roman triremes. The helm was very long, which gives the advantage of a long arm of leverage, but the disadvantage of a small arc of effort. Two wheels in two pulleys at the end of the tiller corrected this defect, and compensated to some extent for the loss of strength. The compass was well housed in a perfectly square case, and well balanced by its two copper frames placed horizontally, one inside the other, on little bolts, as in Cardan's lamps. There were both science and cunning in the construction of the hooker, but untutored science and barbarous cunning. The hooker was primitive, like the praam and the canoe; was akin to the praam in stability and to the canoe in swiftness; and, like all vessels born of the instinct of the pirate and fisherman, it had remarkable sea-going qualities, and was equally well suited to land-locked and to open waters. Its system of sails, complicated in stays and very peculiar, allowed of its navigating the close bays of Asturias (which are little more than

enclosed basins, as Pasages for instance) as well as the open sea. It could sail round a lake, and sail round the world, — a strange craft, as good for a pond as for a storm. The hooker is among vessels what the wagtail is among birds, — one of the smallest and yet one of the boldest. The wagtail perching on a reed scarcely bends it, and flying away crosses the ocean.

The hooker of the poorest Biscayan was gilded and painted. Tattooing was also one of the accomplishments of these people, who are still to some extent savage in their tastes. The superb colouring of their mountains, varied by dazzling snows and emerald meadows, teaches them the wonderful charm that ornamentation exerts. They are poverty-stricken and yet magnificent; they put coats-of-arms on their cottages; they have huge asses, which they bedizen with bells, and huge oxen, on which they put gay head-dresses of feathers. Their coaches, the wheels of which you can hear creaking two leagues off, are illuminated, carved, and decked with ribbons. A cobbler has a bas-relief on his door; it is only St. Crispin and an old shoe, but it is in stone. They trim their leathern jackets with lace. They do not mend their rags, but they embroider them. The Basques are like the Greeks, children of the sun; while the Valencian wraps himself, bare and sad, in his mantle of russet wool, with a hole to pass his head through, the natives of Galicia and Biscay delight in fine linen shirts, bleached in the dew. Their thresholds and their windows teem with fair and fresh faces, laughing under garlands of maize; a joyous and proud serenity shines out in their ingenious arts, in their trades, in their customs, in the dress of their maidens, in their songs. The mountain, that colossal ruin, is all aglow in Biscay: the sun's rays penetrate every nook and crevice. The wild *jaïzquivel* is full of idylls. Biscay

is Pyrenean grace as Savoy represents Alpine grace. With dangerous bays, with storms, with clouds, with flying spray, with the raging of the waves and winds, with terror, with uproar, are mingled boat-women crowned with roses. He who has seen the Basque country once longs to see it again. It is a favoured land, — two harvests a year; villages resonant and gay; a stately poverty; all Sunday the sound of guitars, dancing, castanets, love-making; houses clean and bright; storks in the belfries.

But let us return to Portland, that rugged mountain in the sea.

The peninsula of Portland, viewed geometrically, presents the appearance of a bird's head, of which the bill is turned towards the ocean, the back of the head towards Weymouth; the isthmus is its neck. Portland exists now only for trade. The value of the Portland stone was discovered by quarrymen and plasterers about the middle of the seventeenth century. Ever since that period what is called Roman cement has been made of the Portland stone, — a useful industry, enriching the district but disfiguring the bay. Two hundred years ago these coasts were being eaten away as a cliff; today, as a quarry. The pick bites meanly, the wave grandly; hence a diminution of beauty. To the magnificent ravages of the ocean have succeeded the measured strokes of men. These measured strokes have annihilated the creek where the Biscay hooker was moored. To find any vestige of the little anchorage, now destroyed, the eastern side of the peninsula should be searched, towards the point beyond Folly Pier and Dirdle Pier, beyond Wakeham even, between the place called Church Hope and the place called Southwell.

The creek, walled in on all sides by cliffs much taller than its width, was becoming more and more veiled in

shadow. The misty gloom, usual at twilight, became thicker; it was like the growth of darkness at the bottom of a well. The opening of the creek seaward, a narrow passage, traced on the almost night-black interior a pallid rift where the waves were moving. You must have been quite close to perceive the hooker moored to the rocks, and, as it were, hidden by the great mantle of shadow. A plank extending to a low and level projection of the cliff, the only point on which a landing could be made, placed the vessel in communication with the land. Dark figures were passing and repassing one another on this tottering gangway, and in the shadow beyond several persons could be dimly discerned standing on the deck.

It was less cold in the creek than out at sea, thanks to the screen of rock rising to the north of the basin, which did not, however, prevent the people from shivering. They were hurrying. The effect of the twilight defined the forms as though they had been punched out with a tool. Certain indentations in their clothes were visible, and showed that they belonged to the class called in England, "The ragged." The windings of the pathway could be vaguely distinguished on the side of the cliff. This pathway, full of curves and angles, almost perpendicular, and better adapted for goats than men, terminated at the platform where the plank was placed. The pathways of cliffs ordinarily imply a not very inviting declivity; they plunge downward rather than slope. This one — probably some ramification of a road on the plain above — was disagreeable to look at, so steep was it. From below you saw it attain by a series of zig-zags the summit of the cliff where it passed out on to the high plateau through a cut in the rock; and the passengers for whom the vessel was waiting must have come by this path.

No step, no noise, no breath was heard except the stir of embarkation which was being made in the creek. At the other side of the roads, at the entrance of Ringstead Bay, you could just distinguish a fleet of shark-fishing boats, which were evidently out of their reckoning. These polar boats had been driven from Danish into English waters by the whims of the sea. Northerly winds play these tricks on fishermen. They had just taken refuge in the anchorage of Portland, — a sign of bad weather expected and danger out at sea. They were now engaged in casting anchor. The principal boat was placed in front after the old custom in Norwegian flotillas, all her rigging standing out black, above the sea; while in front might be seen the iron rack, loaded with all kinds of hooks and harpoons destined for the Greenland shark, the dog-fish, and the spinous shark, as well as the nets to pick up the sun-fish. Except a few other craft, all driven into the same corner, the eye beheld nothing on the vast horizon. Not a house, not a ship. The coast in those days was not inhabited, and the roads, at that season, were not safe.

In spite of the ominous indications of the weather, the persons who were going to sail away in the Biscayan *urca*, hastened on the hour of departure. They formed a busy and confused group. To distinguish one from another was difficult; to tell whether they were old or young was impossible. The dim evening light intermixed and blurred them; the mask of shadow was over their faces. There were eight of them, and there were apparently one or two women among them whom it was hard to distinguish under the rags and tatters in which the group was attired, — clothes which were no longer either man's or woman's. Rags have no sex. A smaller shadow, flitting to and fro among the large ones, indicated either a dwarf or a child. It was a child.

CHAPTER II.

LEFT ALONE.

A CLOSE observer might have noticed that all wore long cloaks, torn and patched, but covering them, and if need be concealing them up to the very eyes, — useful alike against the north wind and curiosity. They moved with ease under these cloaks. The greater number wore a handkerchief tied round the head, — a sort of rudiment which marks the commencement of the turban in Spain. This head-dress was nothing unusual in England. At that time the South was in fashion in the North; perhaps this was connected with the fact that the North was beating the South. It conquered and admired. After the defeat of the Armada, Castilian was considered in the halls of Elizabeth as the court language. To speak English in the palace of the Queen of England was deemed almost an impropriety. To adopt partially the manners of those upon whom we impose our laws is very common. It was thus that Castilian fashions penetrated into England; while as an offset, English interests crept into Spain.

One of the men in the group embarking appeared to be a chief. He had sandals on his feet, and was bedizened with gold-lace tatters and a tinsel waistcoat, shining under his cloak like the belly of a fish. Another pulled down over his face a huge piece of felt, cut like a sombrero; this felt had no hole for a pipe, thus indicating the wearer to be a man of letters.

On the principle that a man's vest is a child's cloak, the child was clad in a sailor's jacket, which reached to his knees. By his height you would have supposed him to be a boy of ten or eleven; his feet were bare.

The crew of the hooker was composed of a captain and two sailors. The hooker had apparently come from Spain, and was about to return thither. She was beyond a doubt engaged in a stealthy service from one coast to the other. The persons embarking in her whispered among themselves. The whisperings interchanged by these creatures was a composite sound, — now a word of Spanish, then of German, then of French, then of Gaelic, at times of Basque. It was either a patois or a slang. They appeared to be of all nationalities, and yet to belong to the same band. The motley group appeared to be a company of comrades, perhaps a gang of accomplices. The crew probably belonged to the same brotherhood.

If there had been a little more light, and if one could have seen more distinctly, one might have perceived under the rags of these people rosaries and scapulars half-hidden. One of the women in the group had a rosary almost equal in the size of its beads to that of a dervish, and easy to recognize for an Irish one made at Llanymthefry, which is also called Llanandriffy. One might also have seen, had it not been so dark, a gilded figure of Our Lady and Child on the bow of the hooker. It was probably that of the Basque Notre Dame, — a sort of Panagia of the old Cantabri. Under this image, which occupied the position of a figurehead, was a lantern, which at this moment was not lighted, — an excess of caution which implied an extreme desire of concealment. This lantern was evidently for two purposes: when lighted, it burned before the Virgin, and at the same time illumined the sea, — a beacon doing

duty as a taper. Under the bowsprit the cut-water, long, curved, and sharp, projected in front like the horn of a crescent. At the top of the cut-water, and at the feet of the Virgin, a kneeling angel, with folded wings, leaned her back against the stem, and gazed out through a spy-glass at the horizon. The angel was gilded like Our Lady. In the cut-water were holes and openings to let the waves pass through, which afforded an opportunity for more gilding and arabesques. Under the figure of the Virgin was written, in gilt capitals, the word "Matutina," — the name of the vessel, invisible just now on account of the darkness.

Amid the confusion of departure there were thrown down in disorder, at the foot of the cliff, the goods which the voyagers were to take with them, and which, by means of the plank serving as a bridge across, were being passed rapidly from the shore to the boat. Bags of biscuit, a cask of fish, a case of portable soup, three barrels (one of fresh water, one of malt, one of tar), four or five bottles of ale, an old portmanteau buckled up by straps, trunks, boxes, a ball of tow for torches and signals, — such was the lading. These ragged people had valises, which seemed to indicate a roving life. Wandering rascals are obliged to own something; at times they would prefer to fly away like the birds, but they cannot do so without abandoning the means of earning a livelihood. They necessarily possess boxes of tools and instruments of labour, whatever their trade may be. Those of whom we speak were taking their baggage with them. No time was lost; there was one continued passing to and fro from the shore to the vessel, and from the vessel to the shore. Each one did his share of the work; one carried a bag, another a chest. Those of the promiscuous company who were possibly or probably women, worked like the rest. They overloaded the child.

It was doubtful if the child's father or mother were in the group, for no sign of interest was vouchsafed him. They made him work; but that was all. He appeared not a child in a family, but a slave in a tribe. He waited on every one, and no one even spoke to him. Still he laboured diligently, and like all the other members of this strange party he seemed to have but one thought, — to embark as quickly as possible. Did he know why? Probably not; he hurried mechanically because he saw the others hurry.

The stowing of the cargo in the hold was soon finished, and the moment to put off arrived. The last case had been carried over the gangway, and nothing was left on shore but the men. The two persons in the group who seemed to be women were already on board; six persons, the child among them, were still on the low platform of the cliff. Preparations for immediate departure were apparent on the vessel; the captain seized the helm, a sailor took up an axe to cut the hawser: to cut is an evidence of haste; when there is time it is unknotted.

"Andamos," said, in a low voice, he who appeared to be chief of the six, and who had the spangles on his tattered clothes. The child rushed towards the plank in order to be the first aboard. As he placed his foot on it, two of the men hurried by, at the risk of throwing him into the water, got in before him, and passed on; the fourth drove him back with his fist, and followed the third; the fifth, who was the chief, bounded into rather than sprang aboard the vessel, and as he jumped in kicked the plank, which fell into the sea; a stroke of the hatchet cut the moorings, the helm was put up, the vessel left the shore, and the child remained on land.

CHAPTER III.

ALONE.

THE child remained motionless on the rock, with his eyes fixed; no calling out, no appeal. Though this was unexpected by him, he uttered not a word. The same silence reigned in the vessel. No cry from the child to the men; no farewell from the men to the child. There was on both sides a mute acceptance of the widening distance between them. It was like a separation of ghosts on the banks of the Styx. The child, as if nailed to the rock, up which the tide was beginning to creep, watched the departing bark. It seemed as if he realized his position. What did he realize? Darkness.

A moment more, and the vessel had reached the mouth of the creek, and entered it. Against the clear sky the masthead was visible, rising above the split blocks between which the strait wound as between two walls. Then it was seen no more; all was over; the bark had reached the sea.

The child watched its disappearance; he was astonished but thoughtful. His stupefaction was increased by a sense of the grim reality of existence. It seemed as if there were experience in this youthful being. Did he, perchance, already exercise judgment? Experience coming too early constructs, sometimes, in the depths of a child's mind some dangerous balance, in which the poor little soul weighs God. Feeling himself innocent,

he submitted. There was no complaint; the irreproachable does not reproach. His rough expulsion drew from him no sign; he suffered a sort of internal stiffening. The child did not bow under this sudden blow of fate, which seemed to put an end to his existence ere it had well begun; he received the thunderstroke standing. It would have been evident to any one who could have seen his astonishment unmixed with dejection, that, in the group which abandoned him, there was no one who loved him, and no one whom he loved.

Brooding, the child forgot the cold. Suddenly the wave wetted his feet, — the tide was flowing; a gust passed through his hair, — the north wind was rising. He shivered. There came over him, from head to foot, the shudder of awakening. He glanced about him. He was alone. Up to this time there had never existed for him any other men than those who were now in the hooker, — those men who had just stolen away. Strange to say, those men, the only ones he knew, were really strangers to him. He could not have told who they were. His childhood had been passed among them, without his having the consciousness of being one of them. He was in juxtaposition to them, nothing more. He had just been forgotten by them. He had no money about him, no shoes on his feet, scarcely a garment on his body, not even a piece of bread in his pocket. It was winter; it was night. It would be necessary to walk several miles before a human habitation could be reached. He did not know where he was. He knew nothing, unless it was that those who had come with him to the brink of the sea had gone away without him. He felt himself put outside the pale of life. He felt that man had failed him. He was ten years old.

The child was in a desert, between heights from which he saw the night descending, and depths where

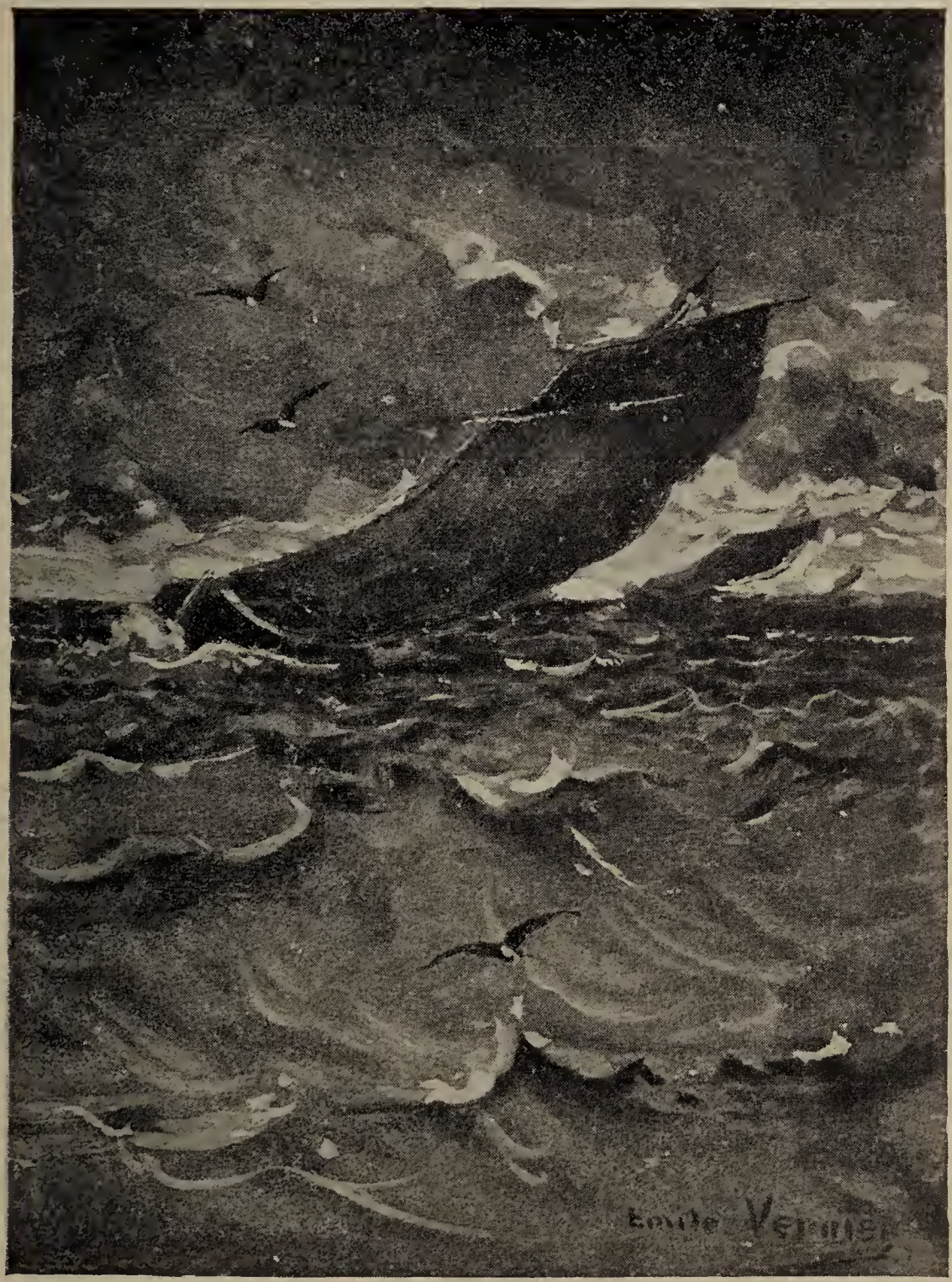
he heard the waves murmuring. He stretched out his little thin arms and yawned. Then, suddenly, with the agility of a squirrel, or perhaps of an acrobat, he turned his back on the creek, and set to work to climb the cliff. He escaladed the path, left it, then returned to it, quick and venturesome. He was hurrying inland, as though he had a destination marked out; nevertheless he was going nowhere. He hastened on without an object,—a fugitive before Fate. To climb is the function of a man; to crawl is that of an animal; he did both.

As the cliffs of Portland face southward, there was scarcely any snow on the path; the intensity of cold had, however, frozen that snow into dust very troublesome to the walker. The child freed himself of it. His jacket, which was much too big for him, complicated matters, and got in his way. Now and then on an overhanging crag or in a declivity he came upon a little ice, which caused him to slip. Then, after hanging some moments over a precipice, he would catch hold of a dry branch or projecting stone. Once he came on a vein of slate, which suddenly gave way under him, letting him down with it. Crumbling slate is treacherous. For some seconds the child slid like a tile on a roof; he rolled to the extreme edge of the chasm; a tuft of grass which he clutched at the right moment saved him. He was as mute on the verge of the abyss as he had been in the company of the men; he gathered himself up and re-ascended silently. The slope was steep; so he had to zig-zag in ascending. The precipice seemed to grow in the darkness, and the summit to recede farther and farther in proportion as the child ascended; but at last he reached the top. He had scarcely set foot on the summit when he began to shiver. The wind cut his face like a whip-lash, for the bitter northwester was blowing. He tightened his rough sailor's jacket

about his chest. It was a good coat, called in ship-language a "sou'-wester," because made of a sort of stuff that allows little of the south-westerly rain to penetrate.

The child, having gained the table-land, stopped, planted his feet firmly on the frozen ground and looked about him. Behind him was the sea; in front the land; above, the sky, — but a sky without stars; an opaque mist hid the zenith. On reaching the summit of the rocky wall he found himself facing the interior, and he gazed at it attentively. It stretched before him far as the eye could reach, flat, frozen, and covered with snow. A few tufts of heather shivered in the wind. No roads were visible, — no dwelling, not even a shepherd's cot. Here and there, pale, spiral vortices might be seen, which were whirls of fine snow, snatched from the ground by the wind and blown away. Successive undulations of ground suddenly became misty and disappeared from view. The great dull plains were lost in the white fog. A deep silence reigned, far-reaching as infinity, hushed as the tomb.

The child turned again towards the sea. The sea, like the land, was white, — the one with snow, the other with foam. There is nothing so melancholy as the light produced by this double whiteness. The sea was like steel, the cliff like ebony. From the height where the child was, the bay of Portland appeared almost like a geographical map in a semicircle of hills. There was something dreamlike in that nocturnal landscape, — a wan disk belted by a dark crescent; the moon sometimes has a similar appearance. From cape to cape, along the whole coast, not a single spark indicated a hearth with a fire; not a lighted window, not an inhabited house, was to be seen. On earth as in heaven there was no light, — not a lamp below, not a star above. Here and there came sudden elevations in the broad ex-



THE STORM.

panse of water, as the wind disturbed and wrinkled the vast sheet. The hooker was still visible in the bay, looking like a black triangle gliding over the water. The " Matutina " was making rapid headway ; she seemed to grow smaller every minute. Nothing can compare in rapidity with the flight of a vessel disappearing in the distance. Suddenly she lighted the lantern at her prow. Probably the darkness closing in around her made those on board uneasy, and the pilot thought it necessary to throw light on the waves. This luminous point, a spark seen from afar, clung like a spectral light to the tall black form.

There was a storm in the air ; the child took no notice of it, but a sailor would have trembled. It was one of those moments when it seems as if the elements were changing into persons, and that one was about to witness the mysterious transformation of the wind into the windgod. The sea becomes Ocean ; its power reveals itself as Will : hence the terror. The soul of man fears to be thus confronted with the soul of Nature. Chaos was about to appear. The wind rolled back the fog, and making a stage of the clouds behind set the scene for that fearful drama of wave and winter, which is called a snow-storm. Vessels putting back hove in sight. For some minutes past the roads had no longer been deserted ; every moment anxious barks hastening towards an anchorage appeared from behind the capes ; some were doubling Portland Bill, the others St. Alban's Head. From afar ships were running in. It was a race for life. Southwards the darkness had thickened, and clouds full of menace bordered the sea. The weight of the tempest hanging overhead made a dreary lull on the waves. It certainly was no time to set sail.

Yet the hooker had sailed. She was steering due south. She was already out of the gulf, and in the

open sea. Suddenly there came a gust of wind. The "Matutina," which was still clearly in sight, put on all sail, as if resolved to profit by the hurricane. It was the nor'-wester, a wind sullen and angry. Its weight was felt instantly. The hooker, caught broadside on, staggered, but recovering held her course to sea. This indicated a flight rather than a voyage, less fear of sea than of land, and greater dread of pursuit from man than from the wind. The hooker, passing through every degree of diminution, sank into the horizon. The little star which she carried paled into shadow, then disappeared, — this time for good and all.

At least the child seemed to understand it so, for he ceased to look at the sea. His gaze reverted to the plains, the moor, the hills, where it might be possible to find some living creature. Towards this unknown region he now directed his steps.

CHAPTER IV.

QUESTIONS.

WHAT kind of a band was it that had left the child behind in its flight. Were those fugitives Comprachicos?

We have already noted the measures taken by William III., and passed by Parliament against the malefactors, male and female, called Comprachicos, otherwise Comprapequeños, otherwise Cheylas. There are laws which scatter people to the four corners of the earth. The law enacted against the Comprachicos determined, not only the Comprachicos, but vagabonds of all sorts on a general flight. It was the devil take the hindmost. A large number of Comprachicos returned to Spain, many of them, as we have said, being Basques. The law for the protection of children had at first this strange result, — it caused many children to be abandoned. The immediate effect of the penal statute was to produce a crowd of children, found, or rather lost. The reason is evident. Every wandering gang containing a child was liable to suspicion. The mere fact of the child's presence was in itself a denunciation. "They are probably Comprachicos." This was the very first idea of the sheriff, of the bailiff, and of the constable. Hence arrest and inquiry. People simply unfortunate, reduced to wander and to beg, were seized with a terror of being taken for Comprachicos, although they were

nothing of the kind; for the weak have grave fears of possible errors in justice. Besides, these vagabonds are very easily scared.

The charge against the Comprachicos was that they traded in other people's children. But the promiscuousness caused by poverty and indigence is such that at times it might have been difficult for a father and mother to prove a child their own. How came you by this child? How were they to prove that they had received it from God? The child became a danger: they got rid of it; to fly unencumbered was easier. The parents resolved to leave it, — now in a wood, now on a beach, now down a well. Many children were found drowned in cisterns.

Let us add that in imitation of England all Europe henceforth hunted down the Comprachicos. The impulse of pursuit was given. There is nothing like belling the cat. From that time on the desire to capture Comprachicos caused much rivalry between the police of the different countries, and the alguazil was no less watchful than the constable.

One could still see, twenty-three years ago, on a stone of the gate of Otero, an untranslatable inscription, — the words of the code outraging propriety. In it, however, the difference which existed between the buyers and kidnappers of children is very strongly marked. Here is part of the inscription in somewhat rough Castilian: "Aqui quedan las orejas de los Comprachicos, y las bolsas de los robaniños, mientras que se van ellos al trabajo de mar." The confiscation of ears, etc., did not prevent their owners from going to the galleys. Hence ensued a general rout among all vagabonds. They started frightened; they arrived trembling. On every shore in Europe their furtive advent was closely watched. It was impossible for such a band to em-

bark with a child, since to disembark with one was so dangerous. To lose the child was a much easier matter.

And this child, of whom we first caught a glimpse in the shadow of the Portland cliffs, by whom had he been abandoned? To all appearance by Comprachicos.

CHAPTER V.

THE TREE OF HUMAN INVENTION.

IT was about seven o'clock in the evening. The wind was diminishing, — a sign, however, of a violent recurrence later on. The child was on the table-land at the extreme south end of Portland.

Portland is a peninsula; but the child did not know what a peninsula was, and had never even heard the name of Portland. He knew only one thing; that was that one could walk until one drops. An idea is a guide; but he had no idea. They had brought him there, and left him there. *They* and *there*. These two enigmas represented his doom. *They* were humankind; *there* was the universe. For him in all creation there was absolutely no basis to rest upon but the little piece of hard, frozen ground where he set his naked feet. In the great twilight world, open on all sides, what was there for him? Nothing. Around him was the vastness of human desertion.

The child crossed the first plateau diagonally, then a second, then a third. At the end of each plateau the child came to a break in the ground. The slope was sometimes steep, but always short; the high, bare plains of Portland resemble great flagstones overlapping one another. The south side seems to enter under the protruding slab, the north side laps over the next one; this made ascents, which the child stepped over nimbly. From time to time he stopped, and seemed

to hold counsel with himself. The night was becoming very dark; his radius of sight was contracting. He could now see only a few steps before him. Suddenly he stopped and listened for an instant; then with an almost imperceptible nod of satisfaction he turned quickly and directed his steps towards an eminence of moderate height, which he dimly perceived on his right, at the end of the plain nearest the cliff. There was on the eminence a shape which in the mist looked like a tree. The child had just heard a noise in this direction, which was neither the noise of the wind nor of the sea; nor was it the cry of an animal. He thought that some one was there, and a few strides brought him to the foot of the hillock.

Some one was there. That which had been indistinct on the top of the eminence was now plainly visible. It looked something like a great arm thrust straight out of the ground; at the upper extremity of the arm a sort of forefinger, supported from beneath by the thumb, pointed out horizontally; the arm, the thumb, and the forefinger formed a triangle against the sky. At the point of juncture of this peculiar finger and this peculiar thumb there was a line, from which hung something black and shapeless. The line moving in the wind sounded like a chain.

This was the noise the child had heard. Seen closely, the line proved to be that which the sound indicated, — a chain; a single chain cable. By that mysterious law which throughout Nature causes appearances to exaggerate realities, the place, the hour, the mist, the mournful sea, the angry clouds on the distant horizon, added to the effect of this figure, and made it seem enormous. The mass appended to the chain presented the appearance of a huge scabbard. There was a round knot at the top, about which the end of the chain was fastened.

The scabbard was riven asunder at the lower end, and long shreds hung between the rents. A faint breeze stirred the chain, and that which was appended to it swayed gently to and fro.

It was altogether an object to inspire indescribable dread. Horror, which disproportions everything, increased its dimensions, without changing its shape. It was a condensation of darkness into a definite form. Twilight and moon-rise, stars setting behind the cliff, the clouds and winds, seemed to have entered into the composition of this visible nonentity. The sort of log hanging in the wind partook of the impersonality diffused over sea and sky, and the darkness completed this phase of the thing which had once been man. It was that no longer.

To be naught but a remainder! — such a thing it is beyond the power of language to express. To exist no more, yet to persist in existing; to be in the dread abyss, yet out of it; to reappear after death as if indissoluble, — all this makes it inexpressible. There is a certain amount of impossibility mixed with such a reality. This being, — was it a being? This black witness was a remainder, and an awful remainder. A remainder of what? Of Nature first, and then of society; zero, and yet total. The wild inclemency of the weather held it at its will; the deep oblivion of solitude environed it. It was given up to unknown chances; it was without defence against the darkness, which did with it what it willed. It was forever the patient; it submitted; the hurricane (that ghastly conflict of winds) was upon it. The spectre was given over to pillage. It underwent the horrible outrage of rotting in the open air; it was an outlaw of the tomb. There was no peace for it even in annihilation; in the summer it fell away into dust, in the winter into mud. Death should be veiled, the grave

should have its reserve. Here was neither veil nor reserve, but cynically avowed putrefaction. It is effrontery in death to display its work; it offends all the calmness of shadow when it does its task outside its laboratory, the grave.

This dead thing had been stripped. To strip one already stripped, — relentless act! His marrow was no longer in his bones; his entrails were no longer in his body; his voice was no longer in his throat. A corpse is a pocket which death turns inside out, and empties. If he ever was an I, where was that I? There still, perchance; and this was fearful to think of. Something wandering about something in chains, — can one imagine a more mournful lineament in the darkness?

Realities exist here below which serve as issues to the unknown, which seem to facilitate the egress of speculation, and at which hypothesis snatches. Conjecture has its *compelle intrare*. In passing by certain places and before certain objects one cannot help stopping, — a prey to dreams into the realms of which the mind enters. In the invisible there are dark portals ajar. No one could have met this dead man without meditating. In the vastness of dispersion he was wearing silently away. He had had blood which had been drunk, skin which had been eaten, flesh which had been stolen. Nothing had passed him by without taking somewhat from him. December had borrowed cold of him; midnight, horror; the iron, rust; the plague, miasma; the flowers, perfume. His slow disintegration was a toll paid to all, — a toll of the corpse to the storm, to the rain, to the dew, to the reptiles, to the birds. All the dark hands of night had rifled the dead. He was, indeed, an inexpressibly strange tenant, — a tenant of the darkness. He was on a plain and on a hill, and *he was not;* he was palpable, yet vanished; he was a shadow accruing to the

night. After the disappearance of day into the vast of silent obscurity, he became in lugubrious accord with all around him; by his mere presence he increased the gloom of the tempest and the calm of the stars. The unutterable which is in the desert was condensed in him; waif of an unknown fate, he commingled with all the wild secrets of the night. There was in his mystery a vague reverberation of all enigmas; about him life seemed sinking to its lowest depths; certainty and confidence appeared to diminish in his environs. The shiver of the brushwood and the grass, a desolate melancholy, an anxiety in which a conscience seemed to lurk, appropriated with tragic force the whole landscape to that black figure suspended by the chain. The presence of a spectre in the horizon is an aggravation of solitude.

This spectre was a Sign. Having unappeasable winds around him, he was implacable. Perpetual shuddering made him terrible. Fearful to say, he seemed to be a centre in space, with something immense leaning on him, — perhaps that equity, half seen and set at defiance, which transcends human justice. There was in his unburied continuance the vengeance of men and his own vengeance. He was a testimony in the twilight and the waste; he was in himself a disquieting substance, since we tremble before the substance which is the ruined habitation of the soul. For dead matter to trouble us, it must once have been tenanted by spirit. He denounced the law of earth to the law of heaven. Placed there by man, he there awaited God. Above him floated, blended with all the vague distortions of the cloud and the wave, boundless dreams of shadow.

Who could tell what sinister mysteries lurked behind this phantom? The illimitable circumscribed by naught — nor tree, nor roof, nor passer-by — was around the

dead man. When the unchangeable broods over us, when heaven, the abyss, the life, grave, and eternity appear patent, then it is we feel that all is inaccessible, all is forbidden, all is sealed. When infinity opens to us, terrible indeed is the closing of the gate behind.

CHAPTER VI.

STRUGGLE BETWEEN DEATH AND NIGHT.

THE child stood before this thing with staring eyes, dumb and wondering. To a man it would have been a gibbet; to the child it was an apparition. Where a man would have seen a corpse, the child saw a spectre. Besides, he did not understand.

The attractions of mysterious horrors are manifold. There was one on the summit of that hill. The child took one step, then another; he ascended, wishing all the while to descend; and he approached, wishing all the while to retreat. When he got close under the gibbet, he looked up and examined the spectre. It was tarred, and here and there it shone. The child could distinguish the face. That too was coated with pitch; and this mask, which appeared viscous and sticky, varied its aspect even in the night shadows. The child saw the mouth, which was a hole; the nose, which was a hole; the eyes, which were holes.

The body was wrapped, and apparently corded up, in coarse canvas, soaked in naphtha. The canvas was mouldy and torn. A knee protruded through it; a rent disclosed the ribs. The face was the colour of earth; slugs, wandering over it, had traced across it vague ribbons of silver. The skull, cracked and fractured, gaped like a huge rotten apple. The teeth were still human, for they retained a laugh; the remains of a cry seemed to linger in the open mouth. There were a few

hairs of beard on the cheek. The inclined head had an air of attention. Some repairs had recently been made; the face had been tarred afresh, as well as the ribs and the knee which protruded from the canvas. The feet hung out below. Just underneath, in the grass, were two shoes, which snow and rain had rendered shapeless. These shoes had fallen from the dead man's feet. The barefooted child looked at the shoes.

The wind, which had become more and more restless, was now and then interrupted by those pauses which foretell the approach of a storm. For the last few minutes it had altogether ceased to blow. The corpse no longer stirred; the chain was as motionless as a plumb line. Like all new-comers into life, and taking into account the peculiar influences of his fate, the child no doubt felt within him that awakening of ideas characteristic of early years, which endeavours to open the brain and which resembles the pecking of the young bird in the egg. But all that there was in his little consciousness just then was resolved into stupor. Excess of sensation has the effect of too much oil, and ends by putting out thought. A man would have put himself questions; the child put himself none; he only looked. The tar gave the face a wet appearance; drops of pitch, congealed in what had once been the eyes, produced the effect of tears. However, thanks to the pitch, the ravages of death, if not annulled, had been greatly retarded. That which hung before the child was a thing of which great care was taken. The man was evidently precious; and though they had not cared to keep him alive, they had cared to preserve him dead. The gibbet was old and worm-eaten, although strong, and had been in use many years.

It was the custom in England to tar smugglers. They were hanged on the seaboard, coated over with

pitch an left swinging. Examples must be made in public, and tarred examples last longest. The tar was a fine thing; by renewing it they were spared the necessity of making too many fresh examples. In those days they placed gibbets from point to point along the coast, as nowadays they do beacons. The hanged man did duty as a lantern. After his fashion, he guided his comrades, the smugglers, who from far out at sea perceived the gibbets. There is one, first warning; another, second warning. It did not however stop smuggling; but public order is made up of such things. The fashion lasted in England up to the beginning of the present century. In 1822 three men could still be seen hanging in front of Dover Castle. But, for that matter, the preserving process was employed not with smugglers alone. England treated robbers, incendiaries, and murderers in the same way. Jack Painter, who set fire to the government storehouses at Portsmouth, was hanged and tarred in 1776. L'Abbé Coyer, who calls him Jean le Peintre, saw him in 1777; Jack Painter was still hanging above the ruin he had made, and was re-tarred from time to time. His corpse lasted (I had almost said lived) nearly fourteen years. It was still doing good service in 1788; in 1790, however, they were obliged to replace it by another. The Egyptians used to value the mummy of the king; a plebeian mummy can also be of service, it seems.

The wind, having great power on the hill, had cleared it of all snow. Herbage was now reappearing on it, interspersed here and there with a few thistles; the hill was covered with that close, short grass which grows by the sea, and makes the tops of cliffs resemble green cloth. Under the gibbet, on the very spot over which hung the feet of the executed criminal, was a long thick tuft, uncommon on such poor soil. Corpses, crumbling

there for centuries past, accounted for the beauty of the grass. Earth feeds on man.

A dreary fascination held the child spell-bound. He only dropped his head a moment when a nettle, which felt like an insect, stung his leg; then he looked up again, — looked up at the face which was looking down on him. It appeared to regard him the more steadfastly because it had no eyes. It was a comprehensive glance, having an indescribable fixedness, in which there was both light and darkness, and which emanated from the skull and teeth as well as from the empty arches of the brow. The whole head of a dead man seems to have vision, and this is awful; no eyeball, yet we feel that we are being looked at.

Little by little the child himself was becoming petrified. He no longer moved. A deadly torpor was stealing over him. He did not even perceive that he was losing consciousness, though he was becoming benumbed and lifeless. Winter was silently delivering him over to night. There is something of the traitor in winter. The child was all but a statue. The coldness of stone was penetrating his bones; darkness, that insidious reptile, was creeping over him. The drowsiness resulting from snow steals over one like a dim tide. The child was being slowly invaded by a stagnation resembling that of the corpse. He was on the point of falling under the gibbet. He no longer knew whether he was standing upright or not.

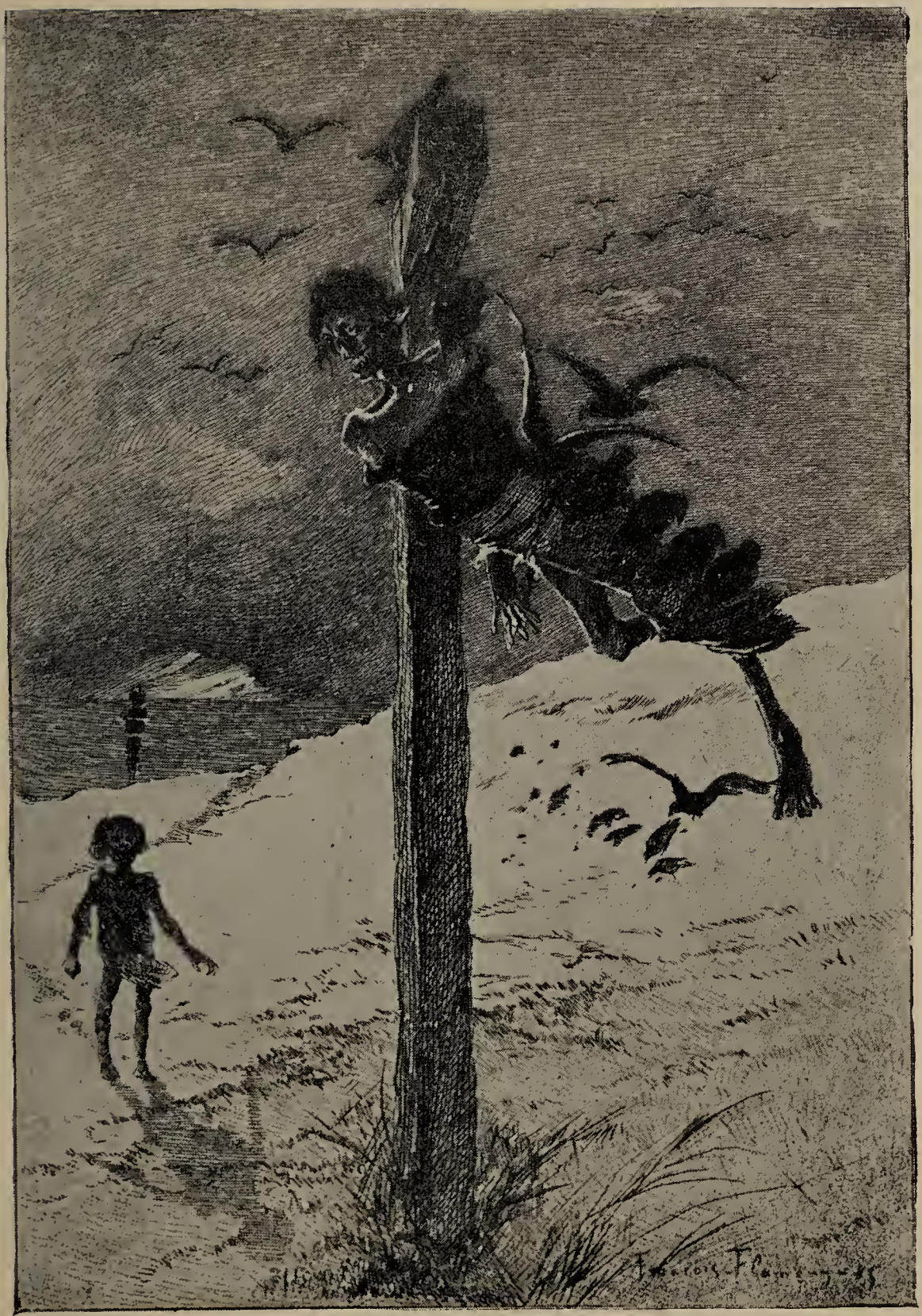
The end always impending, no transition between to be and not to be, the return to the crucible, the slip possible every minute, — such is life! Another instant, and the child and the dead would be victims of the same obliteration.

The spectre seemed to understand this, and not to wish it. Suddenly it moved: one would have said it

was warning the child. The wind was beginning to blow again. Nothing stranger than this dead man in motion could be conceived of. The corpse at the end of the chain, swayed by the invisible gust, assumed an oblique position; rose on the left, then fell back; re-ascended on the right, and then fell and rose with slow and mournful precision. A weird game of see-saw; it seemed as though one saw in the darkness the pendulum of the clock of Eternity.

This continued some time. The child felt himself waking up at the sight; for even through his increasing numbness he experienced a keen sensation of fear. The chain with every oscillation made a creaking sound, with hideous regularity. It seemed to take breath, and then to resume. This creaking was like the cry of a grasshopper. An approaching squall is heralded by sudden gusts of wind; all at once the breeze increased into a gale. The corpse quickened its dismal oscillations; it no longer swung, it tossed. The chain, which had been creaking, now shrieked; it seemed as if its shriek was heard. If it was a call, it was obeyed. From the depths of the horizon came a rushing sound: it was the sound of wings.

An incident now occurred, one of the weird incidents peculiar to graveyards and solitudes. It was the arrival of a flock of ravens. Black flying specks pricked the clouds, pierced the mist, increased in size, came nearer, all hastening towards the hill and uttering shrill cries. It was like the approach of a Legion. The winged vermin of darkness alighted on the gibbet; the child drew back in terror. The birds crowded on the gibbet; not one was on the corpse. They were talking among themselves; the croaking was frightful. The howl, the whistle, and the roar are signs of life; the croak is a pleased announcement of putrefaction; in it you can



The Child at the Gallows.

fancy you hear the grave speak. The child was even more overcome with terror than with cold.

Then the ravens were silent. Finally one of them flew down upon the skeleton. This was the signal: they all precipitated themselves upon it. There was a cloud of wings, then their ranks closed up, and the skeleton disappeared under a swarm of black objects struggling in the darkness. Just then the corpse moved. Was it the corpse, or was it the wind? It made a frightful bound. The hurricane, which was increasing, came to its aid. The skeleton fell into convulsions. The squall, already blowing fiercely, seized hold of it, and dashed it about in all directions. It became horrible; it began to struggle, — an awful puppet, with a gallows' chain for a string. It seemed as if some one had seized the string, and was playing with the mummy; it leaped about as if it would fain dislocate itself. The birds frightened, flew off; it was as if an explosion had scattered the unclean creatures. Then they returned and a fresh struggle began.

The dead man seemed endowed with hideous vitality. The winds lifted him as though they meant to carry him away. He seemed to be struggling and to be making efforts to escape, but his iron collar held him fast. The birds adapted themselves to all his movements, retreating, then striking again, — scared but desperate. The corpse, moved by every gust of the wind, had shocks, starts, fits of rage: it went, it came, it rose, it fell, driving back the scattered swarm. The fierce, assailing flock would not let go their hold, and grew stubborn; the spectre, as if maddened by their attacks, redoubled its blind chastisement of space. At times the corpse was covered by talons and wings; then it was free. There were disappearances of the horde; then sudden furious returns. The birds seemed frenzied. Thrust-

ing of claws, thrusting of beaks, croakings, rendings of shreds which were no longer flesh, creakings of the gibbet, shudderings of the skeleton, rattlings of the chain, the voices of the storm and tumult,— what conflict more fearful? A hobgoblin warring with devils, a combat with a spectre!

At times, the storm redoubling its violence, the hanged man revolved as if upon a pivot, turning every way at once, as if trying to run after the birds. The wind was on his side, the chain against him. It was as if dark-skinned deities were mixing themselves up in the fray. The hurricane took part in the battle. As the dead man turned himself about, the flock of birds wound round him spirally. It was a whirl in a whirlwind. A great roar was heard from below,— it was the sea.

As the child was gazing at this nightmare, he suddenly trembled in every limb; a shiver traversed his frame; he staggered, tottered, nearly fell; recovered himself, pressed both hands to his forehead, as if he felt his forehead a support. Then, with hair streaming in the wind, he descended the hill with long strides, his eyes closed, himself almost a phantom, leaving that horror of the night behind him.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NORTH POINT OF PORTLAND.

THE child ran until he was breathless, at random, desperate, over the plain into the snow, into space. His flight warmed him. He needed it. Without the run and the fright he would have died. When his breath failed him, he stopped, but he dared not look back. He fancied that the birds would pursue him, that the dead man had undone his chain and was perhaps hurrying after him, that possibly the very gibbet itself was descending the hill, running after the dead man; he feared that he should see these things if he turned his head. When he had somewhat recovered his breath, he resumed his flight.

To account for facts does not belong to childhood. This child had received impressions which were magnified by terror, but he did not link them together in his mind, nor form any conclusion on them. He was going on, no matter how or where; he ran in agony and difficulty as one in a dream. During the three hours or so since he had been deserted, his onward progress, still vague, had changed in character. At first it was a search; now it was a flight. He was no longer conscious of hunger or cold; he felt only fear. One instinct had given place to another. To escape was now his one desire, — to escape. From what? From everything. On all sides life seemed to enclose him like a horrible wall. If he could have fled from everything, he would

have done so. But children know nothing of that breaking from prison which is called suicide. He was running; he ran on for an indefinite time. But fear dies with lack of breath.

All at once, as if seized by a sudden accession of energy and intelligence, he stopped. One would have said he was ashamed of running away. He drew himself up, stamped his foot, and with head erect looked round him. There was no hill, no gibbet, no flying crows visible now. The fog had resumed possession of the horizon. The child continued his way; but now he no longer ran, but walked. To say that this meeting with a corpse had made a man of him was not far from the truth. The gibbet which had so terrified him still seemed to him an apparition; but terror overcome is strength gained, and he felt himself stronger. Had he been of an age to probe self, he would have discovered a thousand other germs of meditation; but the reflection of children is shapeless, and the most they feel is the bitter aftertaste of that which, obscure to them, the man later on calls indignation. Let us add that a child has the faculty of promptly accepting the conclusions of a sensation; the distant boundaries which amplify painful subjects escape him. A child is protected by the very limit of his understanding from emotions which are too complex. He sees the fact, and little else. The difficulty of being satisfied with half-formed ideas does not exist so far as he is concerned. It is not until later that experience comes, with its brief, to conduct the lawsuit of life. *Then* he confronts groups of facts which have crossed his path; the understanding, cultivated and enlarged, draws comparisons; the memories of youth reappear like the traces of a palimpsest after erasure; these memories form the bases of logic, and that which was a vision in the child's brain becomes a syllogism in

the man's. Experience is varied, however, and leads to good or evil according to natural disposition.

The child had run quite a quarter of a league, and walked another quarter, when suddenly he felt the cravings of hunger. A thought which altogether eclipsed the hideous apparition on the hill occurred to him, — that he must eat. Happily there are in man brute instincts which serve to lead him back to reality. But what to eat, where to eat, how to eat? He felt in his pockets mechanically, well knowing that they were empty. Then he quickened his pace, without knowing whither he was going. He was hastening towards a possible shelter. This faith in a shelter is one of the convictions rooted by God in man; to believe in a shelter is to believe in God.

On that snow-clad plain, however, there was nothing resembling a roof. Yet the child went on, and the waste continued bare as far as eye could reach. There had never been a human habitation on the table-land. It was at the foot of the cliff, in holes in the rocks, that the aboriginal inhabitants had dwelt long ago,— men who had slings for weapons, dried cow-dung for fuel, for a god the idol Heil standing in a glade at Dorchester, and for a trade the fishing of that grey coral which the Gauls called *plin*, and the Greeks *Isidis plocamos*. The child made his way along as best he could. Destiny is made up of cross-roads; an option of path is sometimes dangerous. This little creature had an early choice of doubtful chances. He continued to advance, but although the muscles of his thighs seemed to be of steel, he began to tire. There were no tracks in the plain, or if there were any the snow had obliterated them. Instinctively he directed his course eastwards. Sharp stones had wounded his heels; had it been daylight, blood-stains might have been seen in the

foot-prints he left in the snow. He recognized no landmarks; for he was crossing the plain from south to north, and it is probable that the band with which he had come, to avoid meeting any one, had crossed it from east to west. They had probably sailed in some fisherman's or smuggler's boat from a point on the coast of Uggescombe (such as St. Catherine's Cape), or Swancry, to Portland, to find the hooker which awaited them; and they must have landed in one of the creeks of Weston, and re-embarked in one of the creeks of Easton. That route intersected the one the child was now following; but it was impossible for him to recognize the road.

On the plain of Portland there are here and there occasional strips of elevated land, ending abruptly at the shore, where they plunge straight down into the sea. The wandering child had now reached one of these culminating points and stopped on it, hoping that a broader view might furnish some helpful indications. He tried to see around him. Before him, in place of an horizon, was a vast livid opacity. He looked at this attentively, and under the intentness of his gaze objects became less indistinct. At the base of a distant eminence to the eastward (a moving and wan sort of precipice, which resembled a cliff of the night) crept and floated some dim black specks, some mere shreds of vapour. The pale opacity was fog, the black shreds were smoke. Where there is smoke there must be men. The child turned his steps in that direction. He saw some distance off a descent, and at the foot of the descent, among shapeless conformations of rock, blurred by the mist, what seemed to be either a sandbank or a tongue of land, probably connecting the plains in the horizon with the table-land he had just crossed. It was evident he must pass that way. He had, in fact, arrived at the Isthmus of Portland, a diluvian alluvium which is called Cheshil.

The child began now to descend the side of the plateau. The descent was difficult and rough. It was (with less ruggedness, however) the reverse of the ascent he had made on leaving the creek. Every ascent is balanced by a decline; after having clambered up, he now crawled down. He leaped from one rock to another at the risk of a sprain, and at the risk of falling into the vague depths below. To save himself when he slipped on the rock or on the ice, he caught hold of tufts of weeds and furze, thick with thorns, the points of which ran into his fingers. Sometimes he came to an easier declivity, where he took breath as he descended; then came to a precipice again, where each step was fraught with peril. In descending precipices every movement is a problem. One must be skilful under penalty of death. These problems the child solved with an instinct which would have won him the admiration of apes and mountebanks. The descent was steep and long. Nevertheless he was nearing the Isthmus, of which from time to time he caught a glimpse. Now and then, as he bounded or dropped from rock to rock, he pricked up his ears, his head erect the while like a listening deer. He was hearkening to a diffused and faint uproar, far away to the left, like the deep note of a clarion. It was the roar of the winds, preceding that fearful northern blast, which is heard rushing from the pole, like an invasion of trumpets. At the same time the child felt on his brow, on his eyes, and on his cheeks something which was like the palms of cold hands being placed on his face. These were large frozen flakes, sown at first softly in space, then eddying wildly and heralding a snow-storm. The child was soon covered with them. The snow-storm, which for the last hour had been raging on the sea, had now reached the land, and was slowly invading the plains.

BOOK II.

THE HOOKER AT SEA.

CHAPTER I.

SUPERHUMAN LAWS.

THE snow-storm is one of the greatest mysteries of the ocean. It is the most obscure of things meteorological; obscure in every sense of the word. It is a mixture of fog and storm; and even in our own day we cannot well account for the phenomenon. Hence many disasters.

We try to explain all things by the action of wind and wave; yet in the air there is a force which is not the wind, and in the waters a force which is not the wave. That force, both in the air and in the water, is effluvium. Air and water are two nearly identical liquid masses, entering into the composition of each other by condensation and dilatation, so that to breathe is to drink. Effluvium alone is fluid. The wind and the wave are only impulses; effluvium is a current. The wind is visible in clouds, the wave is visible in foam; effluvium is invisible. From time to time, however, it says, "I am here." Its "I am here" is a clap of thunder.

The snow-storm offers a problem analogous to the dry fog. If the solution of the *callina* of the Spaniards, and the *quobar* of the Ethiopians be possible, assuredly that

solution will be achieved by attentive observation of magnetic effluvium.

But for effluvium a host of circumstances would remain unexplained. Strictly speaking, the changes in the velocity of the wind, varying from three feet per second to two hundred and twenty feet, would explain the variations of the waves rising from three inches in a calm sea to thirty-six feet in a raging one. Strictly speaking, the horizontal direction of the winds, even in a squall, enables us to understand how it is that a wave thirty feet high can be fifteen hundred feet long. But why are the waves of the Pacific four times higher near America than near Asia; that is to say, higher in the East than in the West? Why is the contrary true of the Atlantic? Why, at the Equator, are they highest in the middle of the sea? Wherefore these deviations in the swell of the ocean? This is something which magnetic effluvium, combined with terrestrial rotation and sidereal attraction, can alone explain.

Is not this mysterious complication needed to explain an oscillation of the wind veering, for instance, by the west from southeast to northeast, then suddenly returning in the same great curve from northeast to southeast, so as to make in thirty-six hours a prodigious circuit of five hundred and sixty degrees? Such was the preface to the snow-storm of March 17, 1867.

The storm-waves of Australia reach a height of eighty feet; this fact is connected with close proximity of the Pole. Storms in those latitudes result less from disorder of the winds than from submarine electrical disturbances. In the year 1866 the transatlantic cable was disturbed at regular intervals in its workings for two hours in the twenty-four, — from noon to two o'clock, — by a sort of intermittent fever. Certain compositions and decompositions of forces produce certain phenomena

which force themselves on the calculations of the seaman under penalty of shipwreck. The day that navigation, now a routine, shall become a branch of mathematics; the day we shall, for instance, seek to know why it is that hot winds sometimes come from the north, and cold winds from the south; the day when we shall understand that diminutions of temperature are proportionate to oceanic depths; the day when we shall realize that the globe is a vast load-stone polarized in immensity, with two axes (an axis of rotation, and an axis of effluvium, intersecting each other at the centre of the earth), and that the magnetic poles turn the geographical poles; when those who risk life will choose to risk it scientifically; when the captain shall be a meteorologist, and the pilot a chemist, — then will many catastrophes be avoided. The sea is as magnetic as it is aquatic; a host of unknown forces float in its liquid waves. To behold in the sea only a mass of water is not to behold it at all. The sea is an ebb and flow of fluid, complicated by magnetic and capillary attractions even more than by hurricanes. Molecular adhesion manifested among other phenomena by capillary attraction, although microscopic, takes in the ocean its place in the grandeur of immensity; and the wave of effluvium sometimes aids, sometimes counteracts, the wave of the air and the wave of the waters. He who is ignorant of electric law is ignorant of hydraulic law; for the one intermixes with the other. It is true there is no study more difficult nor more obscure; it verges on empiricism, just as astronomy verges on astrology; and yet without this study there is no such thing as real navigation. Having said this much, we will pass on.

One of the most dangerous components of the sea is the snow-storm. The snow-storm is above all things magnetic; the pole produces it as it produces the aurora

borealis. Storms are the nervous attacks and delirious frenzies of the sea. The sea has its ailments. Tempests may be compared to maladies. Some are fatal, others are not; some may be escaped, others cannot. A snow-storm is considered extremely dangerous on the sea. Jarabija, one of the pilots of Magellan, termed it "a cloud issuing from the devil's sore side." [1] Surcouf said: "Il y a du trousse-galant dans cette tempête-la." The old Spanish navigators called this kind of squall, *la nevada* when it came with snow; *la helada*, when it came with hail. According to them, bats fell from the sky with the snow. Snow-storms are characteristic of polar latitudes; nevertheless, at times they glide, one might almost say tumble, into our climates.

The "Matutina," as we have seen, plunged resolutely into the perils of the night,—perils greatly increased by the impending storm. She braved them with a sort of tragic audacity, for it must be remembered that she had received due warning.

[1] Una nube salida del malo lado del diablo.

CHAPTER II.

OUR FIRST ROUGH SKETCHES FILLED IN.

WHILE the hooker was in the gulf of Portland, there was very little sea; the ocean, though gloomy, was almost still, and the sky was yet clear. The wind was very little felt on the vessel, for the hooker hugged the cliff as closely as possible, it serving as a screen to her.

There were ten on board the little Biscayan felucca, three men in the crew, and seven passengers, two of whom were women. In the light of the open sea (which changes twilight into day) all the figures on board were clearly visible. Besides, they were not hiding now; they were all at ease; each one resumed his natural manner, spoke in his own voice, showed his face: departure was to them a deliverance.

The motley nature of the group was apparent. The women were of an uncertain age. A wandering life produces premature old age, and indigence is made up of wrinkles. One of the women was a Basque of the Dry-ports; the other, with the large rosary, was an Irish woman. They wore that air of indifference common to the wretched. They had squatted down close to each other when they got on board, on chests at the foot of the mast. They talked to each other. Irish and Basque are, as we have said, kindred languages. The Basque woman's hair was scented with onions and basil. The

skipper of the hooker was a Basque of Guipuzcoa. One sailor was a Basque from the northern slope of the Pyrenees; the other was from the southern slope, — that is to say, they were of the same race, although the first was French and the latter Spanish. The Basques acknowledge no official country. "My mother is called the mountain," [1] as Zalareus, the muleteer, used to say. Of the five men on the hooker, one was a Frenchman of Languedoc, one a Frenchman of Provence, one a Genoese; one, the old man who wore a sombrero without a hole for a pipe, appeared to be a German. The fifth, the chief, was a Basque of the Landes from Biscarrosse. It was he who had with a kick of his heel cast the plank into the sea just as the child was going aboard the hooker. This man, robust, agile, quick in movement, covered, as may be remembered with trimmings, slashings, and glistening tinsel, could not keep still, but sat down, rose up, and continually walked to and fro from one end of the vessel to the other, as if debating uneasily on what had been done and what was going to happen.

This chief of the band, the captain, and the two sailors, all four Basques, spoke sometimes Basque, sometimes Spanish, sometimes French, — these three languages being common on both slopes of the Pyrenees. But generally speaking, all except the women talked something like French, which was the foundation of their slang. The French language, about this period, began to be chosen by the peoples as a happy medium between the excess of consonants in the north and the excess of vowels in the south. In Europe, French was the language of commerce, and also of felony. It will be remembered that Gibby, a London thief, understood Cartouche.

The hooker, a fine sailer, was making rapid progress;

[1] Mi madre se llama Montaña.

still, ten persons, besides their baggage, were a heavy cargo for a vessel of such light draught.

The fact of the vessel's aiding the escape of a band did not necessarily imply that the crew were accomplices. It was sufficient that the captain of the vessel was a Vascongado, and that the chief of the band was another. Among that race mutual assistance is a duty which admits of no exception. A Basque, as we have said, is neither Spanish nor French; he is a Basque, and always and everywhere he must succour a Basque. Such is Pyrenean fraternity.

While the hooker was in the gulf, the sky, although threatening, did not frown enough to cause the fugitives any uneasiness. They were flying swiftly along, they were escaping, and they were noisily gay. One laughed, another sang; the laugh was dry but free, the song was low but careless. The Languedocian cried, "Caoucagno!"[1] He was a longshore-man, a native of the waterside village of Gruissan, on the southern side of the Clappe, — a bargeman rather than a mariner, but accustomed to navigate the inlets of Bages, and to draw the drag-net full of fish over the salt sands of St. Lucie. He was of the race that wears a red cap, makes complicated signs of the cross after the Spanish fashion, drinks wine out of goat-skins, eats scraped ham, kneels down to blaspheme, and adjures his patron saint with threats: "Great saint! grant me what I ask, or I'll throw a stone at thy head, — *ou té feg un pic!*" He might at need prove a useful addition to the crew.

The Provençal in the caboose was punching a turf fire under an iron pot, and making broth. The broth was a kind of *puchero*, in which fish took the place of meat, and into which the Provençal threw peas, little bits of bacon cut in squares, and pods of red pimento, — con-

[1] *Cocagne* expresses the highest pitch of satisfaction in Narbonne.

cessions made by the eaters of *bouillabaisse* to the eaters of *olla podrida*. One of the bags of provisions lay beside him unpacked. Over his head he had lighted an iron lantern, glazed with talc, which swung on a hook from the ceiling; near it from another hook swung the weather-cock halcyon.[1] While he made the broth, the Provençal put the neck of a gourd into his mouth, and now and then swallowed a draught of aguardiente. It was one of those gourds covered with wicker, broad and flat, with handles, which used to be hung at the side by a strap, and which were then called hip-gourds. Between each gulp he mumbled one of those country songs about nothing in particular. One needs, to make such a song, no more than to see (even in imagination) a hollow road, a hedge; in a meadow, through a gap in the bushes, the shadow of a horse and cart, elongated in the sunset, and from time to time, above the hedge, the end of a fork loaded with hay appearing and disappearing.

According to the state of one's mind, a departure is either a relief or the reverse. All seemed lighter in spirits except the old man of the party. This old man, who looked more German than anything else, although he had one of those unfathomable faces in which nationality is lost, was bald; and he was so grave that his baldness might have been a tonsure. Every time he passed the Virgin on the prow he raised his felt hat, so that you could see the swollen and senile veins of his skull. A sort of full gown, torn and threadbare, of brown Dorchester serge, half hid his closely fitting coat, tight, compact, and hooked up to the neck like a cassock. His hands seemed inclined to cross each other, as

[1] There was a popular belief in those days that a dead halcyon hung by the beak always turned its breast to the quarter whence the wind was blowing.

if habituated to an attitude of prayer. He had what might be called a wan countenance; for the countenance is above all things a reflection, and it is an error to believe that an idea is colourless. That countenance was evidently the reflection of a strange mental state, the result of a composition of contradictions, — some tending to drift away in good, others in evil; and to an observer it was the revelation of one who was less and more than human, capable of falling below the scale of the tiger or of rising above that of man. Such chaotic souls exist. There was something inscrutable in this old man's face. In his impassibility, which was perhaps only on the surface, there was portrayed a twofold petrifaction, — the petrifaction of heart proper to the hangman, and the petrifaction of mind proper to the mandarin. One might have said (for the monstrous has its mode of being complete) that all things were possible to him, even emotion. In every savant there is something of the corpse, and this man was a savant. One saw science imprinted in the gestures of his body and in the folds of his dress. His was a fossil face, the serious cast of which was counteracted by that wrinkled mobility of the polyglot which verges on grimace. But he was a severe man withal, — nothing of the hypocrite, nothing of the cynic; a tragic dreamer also. He was one of those men whom crime leaves pensive. He had the brow of an incendiary tempered by the eyes of an archbishop; his sparse grey locks had turned to white over his temples. The Christian was evident in him, complicated with the fatalism of the Turk. Chalkstones deformed his fingers, which were skeleton-like in their thinness. The stiffness of his tall frame was grotesque. He had his sea-legs on; he walked slowly about the deck, not looking at any one, with an air at once stern and sinister. His eyeballs were filled with the fixed

stare of a soul groping in darkness and afflicted with violent compunctions of conscience. From time to time the chief of the band, abrupt and alert, and making sudden turns about the vessel, came to the old man and whispered in his ear. He answered with a nod. It might have been the lightning consulting the night.

CHAPTER III.

TROUBLED MEN ON THE TROUBLED SEA.

TWO men on board the craft were absorbed in thought, —the old man, and the captain of the hooker, who must not be mistaken for the chief of the band. The captain was occupied by the sea; the old man by the sky. The former did not lift his eyes from the waters; the latter kept close watch of the firmament. The captain's anxiety was the state of the sea; the old man seemed to distrust the heavens. He scanned the stars through every break in the clouds.

It was the hour when day still lingers, but when a few stars begin to pierce the twilight. The horizon was singular, the mist upon it varied. A haze predominated on land, clouds at sea. The captain, noting the rising billows, had everything made taught before he got outside Portland Bay. He would not delay so doing until he should pass the headland. He examined the rigging closely, and satisfied himself that the lower shrouds were well set up, and that they supported firmly the futtock-shrouds, — precautions of a man who means to carry a press of sail at all hazards. The hooker was not trimmed, being two foot by the head; this was her weak point. The captain passed every minute from the binnacle to the standard compass, taking the bearings of objects on shore. The "Matutina" had at first a wind which was not unfavourable, though she could not lie within five points of her course. The captain took the

helm as often as possible, trusting no one but himself to prevent her from dropping to leeward, the effect of the rudder being influenced by the steerage-way.

The difference between the true and apparent course being considerable, the hooker seemed to lie closer to the wind than she really did. The breeze was not a-beam, nor was the hooker close-hauled; but one cannot ascertain the true course made, except when the wind is abaft. When one perceives long streaks of clouds meeting in a point on the horizon, one may be sure that the wind is in that quarter. But this evening the wind was variable; the needle fluctuated. The captain distrusted the erratic movements of the vessel. He steered carefully but resolutely, luffed her up, watched her coming-to, prevented her from yawing and from running into the winds' eye; noted the leeway, the little jerks of the helm; was observant of every roll and pitch of the vessel, of the difference in her speed, and of the variable gusts of wind. For fear of accidents, he was constantly on the lookout for squalls from off the land he was hugging; and above all he was cautious to keep her sails full, — the indications of the compass being uncertain from the small size of the instrument. The captain's eyes, frequently lowered, remarked every change in the waves. Once, however, he raised them towards the sky, and tried to make out the three stars of Orion's belt. These stars are called the three magi, and an old proverb of the ancient Spanish pilots declares that, "He who sees the three magi is not far from the Saviour."

This glance of the captain tallied with an aside growled out, at the other end of the vessel, by the old man: "We don't even see the pointers, nor the star Antares, red as he is. Not one of them is visible."

No fears troubled the other fugitives. Still, when the first hilarity they felt at their escape had passed away,

they could not help remembering that they were at sea in the month of January, and that the wind was freezing cold. It was impossible to establish themselves in the cabin; it was much too narrow and too encumbered with bales and baggage. The baggage belonged to the passengers, the bales to the crew; for the hooker was no pleasure-boat, and was engaged in smuggling. The passengers were obliged to remain on deck, a state of things to which these wanderers easily resigned themselves. Open-air habits make it easy for vagabonds to settle themselves for the night. The open air (*la belle étoile*) is their friend, and the cold helps them to sleep, — sometimes to die. But to-night, as we have seen, there was no *belle étoile*.

The Languedocian and the Genoese, while waiting for supper, rolled themselves up near the women, at the foot of the mast, in some tarpaulins which the sailors had thrown them. The old man remained at the bow motionless, and apparently insensible to the cold. The captain of the hooker, from the helm where he was standing, uttered a sort of guttural call somewhat like the cry of the American bird called the Exclaimer. At his call the chief of the band drew near, and the captain addressed him thus: —

"Etcheco jaüna." These two words, which mean "tiller of the mountain," form with these old Cantabri a solemn preface to any subject which should command attention. Then, the captain having pointed the old man out to the chief, the dialogue continued in Spanish; though it was not a very correct dialect, being that of the mountains. Here are the questions and answers:

"Etcheco jaüna, que es este hombre?"

"Un hombre."

"Que lenguas habla?"

"Todas."

"Que cosas sabe?"
"Todas."
"Qual païs?"
"Ningun, y todos."
"Qual dios?"
"Dios."
"Como le llamas?"
"El tonto."
"Como dices que le llamas?"
"El sabio."
"En vuestre tropa que esta?"
"Esta lo que esta."
"El gefe?"
"No."
"Pues que esta?"
"La alma."[1]

The chief and the captain parted, each to continue his own meditation, and a little while afterwards the "Matutina" left the gulf.

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1 "Tiller of the mountain, who is that man?"
"A man."
"What tongue does he speak?"
"All."
"What things does he know?"
"All."
"What is his country?"
"None and all."
"Who is his God?"
"God."
"What do you call him?"
"The madman."
"What do you say you call him?"
"The wise man."
"In your band, what is he?"
"He is what he is."
"The chief?"
"No."
"Then what is he?"
"The soul."

Now came the great rolling of the open sea. The ocean in the spaces between the foam was slimy in appearance. The waves seen through the twilight in indistinct outline somewhat resembled splashes of gall. Here and there a level space between the waves showed cracks and stars, like a pane of glass broken by stones; and in the centre of these stars, as in a revolving orifice, trembled a phosphorescent gleam, like that feline reflection of vanished light which shines in the eyeballs of owls.

Proudly, like a strong, bold swimmer, the "Matutina" crossed the dangerous Shambles shoal. This bank, a hidden obstruction at the entrance of Portland roads, is not a barrier but an amphitheatre, its benches cut out by the circling of the waves. An arena, round and symmetrical, as high as a Jungfrau, only submerged; an oceanic coliseum, seen by the diver in the vision-like transparency which ingulfs him,— such is the Shambles shoal. There hydras fight, leviathans meet. There, says the legend, at the bottom of the gigantic shaft, are the wrecks of ships, seized and sunk by the huge Kraken, also known as the devil-fish. These spectral realities, unknown to man, are indicated at the surface only by a slight ripple.

In this nineteenth century the Shambles bank is in ruins; the breakwater recently constructed has overthrown and mutilated, by the force of its surf, that high submarine structure, just as the jetty built at the Croisic in 1760 changed, by a quarter of an hour, the courses of the tides. And yet the tide is eternal. But eternity is more subservient to man than man imagines.

CHAPTER IV.

A CLOUD DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS ENTERS ON THE SCENE.

THE old man whom the chief of the band had called first the Madman, then the Sage, now never left the forecastle. Since they crossed the Shambles shoal, his attention had been divided between the heavens and the waters. He looked down, he looked upwards, and above all watched the northeast. The captain gave the helm to a sailor, stepped over the aft hatchway, crossed the gangway, and went on to the forecastle. He approached the old man, but not from the front; he passed a little behind him, with elbows resting on his hips, with outstretched hands, his head on one side, with open eyes and arched eyebrows, and a smile in the corners of his mouth, — an attitude of curiosity hesitating between mockery and respect. The old man, either because it was his habit to talk to himself, or because hearing some one behind him incited him to speech, began to soliloquize while he looked into space: —

"The Meridian from which the right ascension is calculated is marked in this century by four stars, — the Polar, Cassiopeia's Chair, Andromeda's Head, and the star Algenib, which is in Pegasus. But not one of them is visible."

These words followed one another mechanically, and were scarcely articulated, as if he did not care to pronounce them. They floated out of his mouth and dispersed. Soliloquy is the smoke exhaled by the inmost fires of the soul.

The captain broke in: "Señor!"

The old man, perhaps rather deaf as well as very thoughtful, went on: "Too few stars, and too much wind. The breeze continually changes its direction and blows inshore; thence it rises perpendicularly. This results from the land being warmer than the water. Its atmosphere is lighter. The cold, dense wind of the sea rushes in to replace it. From this cause, in the upper regions the wind blows towards the land from every quarter. It would be advisable to make long tacks between the real and apparent parallel. When the latitude by observation differs from the latitude by dead reckoning, by not more than three minutes in thirty miles or by four minutes in sixty miles, you are in the true course."

The captain bowed, but the old man saw him not. The latter, who wore what resembled an Oxford or Göttingen university gown, did not relax his haughty and rigid attitude. He observed the waters as a critic of waves and of men. He studied the billows, but almost as if he was about to demand his turn to speak amidst their turmoil, and teach them something. There was in him both pedagogue and soothsayer. He seemed an oracle of the deep. He continued his soliloquy, which was perhaps intended to be heard:—

"We might try, if we had a wheel instead of a helm. With a speed of twelve miles an hour, a force of twenty pounds exerted on the wheel produces three hundred thousand pounds' effect on the course. And more, too; for in some cases, with a double block and runner, they can get two more revolutions."

The captain bowed a second time, and said, "Señor!"

The old man's eye rested on him; he had turned his head without moving his body. "Call me Doctor."

"Master Doctor, I am the captain."

"Just so," said the doctor. The doctor, as henceforward we shall call him, appeared willing to converse: "Captain, have you an English sextant?"

"No."

"Without an English sextant you cannot take an altitude at all."

"The Basques," replied the captain, "took altitudes before there were any English."

"Be careful you are not taken aback."

"I keep her away when necessary."

"Have you tried how many knots she is running?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"Just now."

"How?"

"By the log."

"Did you take the trouble to look at the triangle?"

"Yes."

"Did the sand run through the glass in exactly thirty seconds?"

"Yes."

"Are you sure that the sand has not worn the hole between the globes?"

"Yes."

"Have you proved the sand-glass by the oscillations of a bullet?"

"Suspended by a rope-yarn drawn out from the top of a coil of soaked hemp? Undoubtedly."

"Have you waxed the yarn lest it should stretch?"

"Yes."

"Have you tested the log?"

"I tested the sand-glass by the bullet, and checked the log by a round shot."

"Of what size was the shot?"

"One foot in diameter."

"Heavy enough!"

"It is an old round shot of our war-hooker, 'La Casse de Par-Grand.'"

"Which was in the Armada?"

"Yes."

"And which carried six hundred soldiers, fifty sailors, and twenty-five guns?"

"Shipwreck knows it."

"How did you compute the resistance of the water to the shot?"

"By means of a German scale."

"Have you taken into account the resistance of the rope supporting the shot to the waves?"

"Yes."

"What was the result?"

"The resistance of the water was one hundred and seventy pounds."

"That's to say, she is running four French leagues an hour."

"And three Dutch leagues."

"But that is the difference merely of the vessel's way and the rate at which the sea is running?"

"Undoubtedly."

"Whither are you steering?"

"For a creek I know, between Loyola and St. Sebastian."

"Make the latitude of the harbour's mouth as soon as possible."

"Yes, as near as I can."

"Beware of gusts and currents. The first cause the second."

"Yes: the traitors!"

"No abuse! The sea understands. Insult nothing; be satisfied with watching."

"I have watched, and I am still watching. Just now

the tide is running against the wind; by-and-by, when it turns, we shall be all right."

"Have you a chart?"

"No; not for this channel."

"Then you sail by rule of thumb?"

"Not at all. I have a compass."

"The compass is one eye, the chart the other."

"A man with one eye can see."

"How do you compute the difference between the true and apparent course?"

"I 've got my standard compass, and I make a guess."

"To guess is all very well. To know for a certainty is better."

"Christopher [1] guessed."

"When there is a fog and the needle revolves treacherously, you can never tell on which side you should look out for squalls; and the end of it is that you know neither the real nor apparent day's work. An ass with his chart is better off than a wizard with his oracle."

"There is no fog yet, and I see no cause for alarm."

"Ships are like flies in the spider's web of the sea."

"Just now both winds and waves are tolerably favourable."

"Black specks quivering on the billows, — such are men on the ocean."

"I dare say there will be nothing wrong to-night."

"You may get into a mess that you will find it hard to get out of."

"Yes; but all goes well at present."

The doctor's eyes were fixed on the northeast. The captain continued: —

"Let us once reach the Gulf of Gascony, and I can answer for our safety. Ah, I am at home there! I know it well, my Gulf of Gascony! It is a little basin,

[1] Columbus.

often very boisterous; but there I know every sounding and the nature of the bottom, — mud opposite San Cipriano, shells opposite Cizarque, sand off Cape Peñas, little pebbles off Boncaut de Mimizan; and I know the colour of every pebble."

The captain broke off; the doctor was no longer listening. He was gazing at the northeast. Over that icy face passed an extraordinary expression. All the agony of terror possible to a mask of stone was depicted there. From his mouth escaped the word, "Ha!"

His eyes were dilated with horror as he perceived a speck on the horizon. Then he added, under his breath, "It is well. As for me, I do not object."

The captain looked at him.

The doctor went on talking to himself, or to some one in the deep: "Yes, I say." Then he was silent, and fixed his eyes with renewed attention on that which he was watching, and said: "It is coming from afar off, but it will come none the less surely."

The arc of the horizon which engrossed the visual orbs and thoughts of the doctor, being opposite to the west, was illuminated by the transcendent reflection of twilight, as if it were day. This arc, limited in extent, and surrounded by streaks of greyish vapour, was uniformly blue, but of a leaden rather than cerulean blue. The doctor pointed to this atmospheric arc, and said:

"Captain, do you see?"

"What?"

"That."

"What?"

"Out there."

"A blue spot? Yes."

"What is it?"

"An opening in the heavens."

"For those who go to heaven; for those who go else-

where it is another affair," — and the doctor emphasized these enigmatical words with an appalling expression which was unseen in the darkness.

A silence ensued. The captain, remembering the two names given by the chief to this man, asked himself the question: "Is he a madman, or is he a sage?"

The stiff and bony finger of the doctor continued to point, like a sign-post, to the dark spot in the sky.

The captain looked at this spot. "In truth," he growled out, "it is not sky, but clouds."

"A blue cloud is worse than a black cloud," said the doctor; "and it's a snow-cloud," he added.

"La nube de la nieve," said the captain, as if trying to understand the word better by translating it.

"Do you know what a snow-cloud is?" asked the doctor.

"No."

"You'll know by-and-by."

The captain again turned his attention to the horizon. Continuing to observe the cloud, he muttered between his teeth: —

"One month of squalls, another of wet; January with its gales, February with its rains, — that 's all the winter we Asturians get. Our rain even is warm. We 've no snow but on the mountains. Ay, ay, look out for the avalanche. The avalanche is no respecter of persons; the avalanche is a brute."

"And the water-spout is a monster," said the doctor, adding, after a pause, "here it comes." He continued: "Several winds are getting together, — a strong wind from the west, and a gentle wind from the east."

"That last is a deceitful one," said the captain.

The blue cloud was growing larger. "If the snow," said the doctor, "is appalling when it slips down the mountain, think what it is when it falls from the Pole!" His eye was glassy. The cloud seemed to spread over

his face and almost simultaneously over the horizon. He continued, in musing tones: "Every minute the fatal hour draws nearer. The will of Heaven is about to be manifested."

The captain again asked himself this question, "Is he a madman?"

"Captain," began the doctor, without taking his eyes off the cloud, "have you often crossed the Channel?"

"This is the first time."

"How is that?"

"Master Doctor, my usual cruise is to Ireland. I sail from Fontarabia to Black Harbour, or to the Achill Islands. I go sometimes to Braich-y-Pwll, a point on the Welsh coast. But I always steer outside the Scilly Islands. I do not know this sea at all."

"That 's unfortunate. Woe to him who is inexperienced on the ocean! One ought to be familiar with the Channel: the Channel is the Sphinx. Look out for shoals."

"We are in twenty-five fathoms of water here."

"We ought to get into fifty-five fathoms to the west, and avoid even twenty fathoms to the east."

"We 'll sound as we get on."

"The Channel is not an ordinary sea. The water rises fifty feet with the spring tides, and twenty-five with neap tides. Here we are in slack water. I thought you looked scared."

"We 'll sound to-night."

"To sound you must heave-to, and that you cannot do."

"Why not?"

"On account of the wind."

"We 'll try."

"The squall is close upon us."

"We 'll sound, Master Doctor."

"You could not even bring-to."

"Trust in God."

"Take care what you say. Do not utter that dread name lightly."

"I will sound, I tell you."

"Be sensible; you will have a gale of wind presently."

"I say that I will try for soundings."

"The resistance of the water will prevent the lead from sinking, and the line will break. Ah, so this is your first experience in these waters?"

"My first."

"Very well; in that case listen, Captain."

The tone of the word "listen" was so commanding that the captain made an obeisance: "Master Doctor, I am all attention."

"Port your helm, and haul up on the starboard tack."

"What do you mean?"

"Direct your course westward."

"*Caramba!*"

"Direct your course westward."

"Impossible!"

"As you will. What I tell you is for the sake of the others. As for myself, I am indifferent."

"But, Master Doctor, steer west?"

"Yes, Captain."

"The wind will be dead against us."

"Yes, Captain."

"She 'll pitch like the devil."

"Moderate your language. Yes, Captain."

"The vessel would be in irons."

"Yes, Captain."

"That means very likely the mast will go."

"Possibly."

"And yet you wish me to steer westward?"

"Yes."

"I cannot."

"In that case settle your reckoning with the sea."

"The wind ought to change."

"It will not change to-night."

"Why not?"

"Because it is a wind twelve hundred leagues in length."

"Make headway against such a wind? Impossible!"

"Steer westward, I tell you."

"I 'll try; but in spite of everything she will fall off."

"That 's the danger."

"The wind is driving us towards the east."

"Don't go to the east."

"Why not?"

"Captain, do you know what is sure death for us?"

"No."

"Death is *the east.*"

"I 'll steer west."

This time the doctor, having turned right round, looked the captain full in the face, and with his eyes resting on him, as though to implant the idea in his head, pronounced slowly, syllable by syllable, these words: "If to-night out at sea we hear the sound of a bell, the ship is lost."

The captain pondered in amaze: "What do you mean?"

The doctor did not answer. His countenance so expressive a moment before was now reserved. His eyes became vacuous; he did not seem to hear the captain's wondering question. He was now engrossed by his own thoughts. His lips let fall, as if mechanically, in a low murmuring tone, these words: "The time has come for sullied souls to purify themselves."

The captain elevated his chin scornfully. "He is more madman than sage," he growled, as he moved off. Nevertheless he steered westward.

But both the wind and the sea were increasing.

CHAPTER V.

HARDQUANONNE.

THE appearance of the clouds was becoming ominous. In the west as in the east the sky was now nearly covered with dark, angry clouds, which were rapidly advancing in the teeth of the wind. These contradictions are part of the wind's vagaries. The sea, which had been clothed in scales a moment before, now wore a skin, — for such is the nature of this aquatic monster. It was no longer a crocodile, it was a boa-constrictor. Its lead-coloured skin looked immensely thick, and was crossed by heavy wrinkles. Here and there, on its surface, bubbles of froth, like pustules, gathered and then burst. The foam was like leprosy. It was at this moment that the hooker, still seen from afar by the child, lighted her signal.

A quarter of an hour elapsed. The captain looked around for the doctor; he was no longer on deck. Directly the captain left him, the doctor bent his somewhat ungainly form and entered the cabin, where he sat down near the stove, on a block. He took a shagreen ink-bottle and a cordwain pocket-book from his pocket; extracted from the pocket-book a parchment folded four times, old, stained, and yellow; opened the sheet, took a pen out of his ink-case, laid the pocket-book flat on his knee and the parchment on the pocket-book, and by the rays of the lantern, which was lighting the cook, set to writing on the back of the parchment. Though

the rolling of the waves inconvenienced him, he wrote on thus for some time.

As he wrote, the doctor noticed the gourd of aguardiente, which the Provençal tasted every time he added a grain of pimento to the puchero, as if he were consulting with reference to the seasoning. The doctor noticed the gourd, not because it was a flask of brandy, but because of a name which was plaited in the wicker-work, with red rushes on a white background. There was light enough in the cabin to permit of his reading the name. The doctor paused and spelled it in a low voice: "Hardquanonne." Then he addressed the cook:—

"I never observed this gourd before; did it belong to Hardquanonne?"

"Yes," the cook answered, — "to our poor comrade, Hardquanonne."

"To Hardquanonne, the Fleming of Flanders?"

"Yes."

"The same who is in prison?"

"Yes."

"In the dungeon at Chatham?"

"Yes, it is his gourd," replied the cook. "He is a friend of mine, and I keep it in remembrance of him. When shall we see him again? It is the bottle he used to wear slung over his hip."

The doctor took up his pen again, and continued laboriously tracing somewhat straggling lines on the parchment. He was evidently anxious that his hand-writing should be very legible. At last, notwithstanding the tremulousness of the vessel and the tremulousness of age, he finished what he wanted to write.

It was time; for suddenly a sea struck the craft, a mighty rush of waters besieged the hooker, and they felt her break into that fearful dance in which ships lead off with the tempest.

The doctor rose and approached the stove, meeting the ship's motion with his knees dexterously bent, dried as best he could, at the stove where the pot was boiling, the lines he had written, refolded the parchment in the pocket-book, and replaced the pocket-book and the ink-horn in his pocket.

The stove was not the least ingenious piece of interior economy in the hooker. It was judiciously isolated, yet the pot oscillated wildly. The Provençal watched it closely.

"Fish broth," said he.

"For the fishes," replied the doctor, as he went on deck again.

CHAPTER VI.

THEY THINK THAT HELP IS AT HAND.

THROUGH his growing pre-occupation, the doctor dreamily reviewed the situation; and any one near him might have heard these words drop from his lips: "Too much rolling, and not enough pitching." Then he again relapsed into thought, as a miner into his shaft. His meditation in nowise interfered with his watch of the sea. The contemplation of the sea is in itself a reverie.

The travail of the eternally tortured waters was commencing. A wail of lamentation arose from the whole main. Confused and ominous preparations were going on in space. The doctor noted each detail, though there was no sign of scrutiny in his face. One does not scrutinize hell. A vast commotion, as yet half latent, but visible through the turmoils in space, increased and irritated the winds, the vapours, and the waves more and more. Nothing is so logical and yet nothing appears so erratic as the ocean. Self-dispersion is the essence of its sovereignty, and one of the elements of its redundance. The sea is ever for or against. It knots, that it may unravel itself; one of its waves attacks, the other relieves. There is nothing so truly wonderful as the waves. Who can paint the alternating hollows and elevations, the heaving bosoms, the majestic outlines? Who can describe the thickets of foam, the blendings of mountains and dreams? The indescribable is every-

where there, in the rending, in the frowning, in the anxiety, in the perpetual contradiction, in the chiaroscuro, in the pendants of the clouds, in the ever-changing curves, in the disaggregation without rupture, in the mighty uproar caused by all that overhanging tumult!

The wind had just veered around to the north, and its violence was so favourable and useful in driving them away from England that the captain of the "Matutina" had made up his mind to set all sail. The hooker dashed through the foam at a gallop, bounding from wave to wave in a gay frenzy. The fugitives were delighted, and laughed; they clapped their hands; applauded the surf, the sea, the wind, the sails, the swift progress, the flight, all unmindful of the future. The doctor seemed not to see them, and dreamed on.

Every vestige of day had faded away. This was the moment when the child, watching from the distant cliff, lost sight of the hooker. Up to that time his gaze had been riveted upon the vessel. Did that look exert any influence over the vessel's fate? When the hooker was lost to sight in the distance, and when the child could no longer see aught of it, he went north and the ship went south. Both were plunged in darkness.

CHAPTER VII.

SUPERHUMAN HORRORS.

IT was with wild rejoicing and delight that those on board the hooker saw the hostile land recede and lessen behind them. By degrees the dark ring of ocean rose higher, dwarfing in the twilight Portland, Purbeck, Tineham, Kimmeridge, the Matravers, the long lines of dim cliffs, and the coast dotted with lighthouses. England disappeared. The fugitives had now nothing around them but the sea.

All at once the darkness became frightful. There was no longer space; the sky became as black as ink, and closed in round the vessel. The snow began to fall slowly, only a few flakes at first. They might have been ghosts. Nothing else was visible. A snare lurked in every possibility.

It is in this cavernous darkness that in our climate the Polar water-spout makes its appearance. A great muddy cloud, resembling the belly of a hydra, hung over the ocean, its livid base adhering to the waves in some places. Some of these adherences resembled pouches with holes, pumping up the sea, disgorging vapour, and refilling themselves with water. Here and there these suctions raised cones of foam on the sea.

The boreal storm hurled itself on the hooker; the hooker rushed to meet it. The squall and the vessel met as though to insult each other. In the first mad shock not a sail was reefed, not a jib lowered; the mast

creaked and bent back as if in fear. Cyclones in our northern hemisphere circle from left to right, in the same direction as the hands of a watch, with a velocity which is sometimes as much as sixty miles an hour. Although she was entirely at the mercy of the storm, the hooker behaved as if she were out in moderate weather, without any further precaution than keeping her head to the billows, with the wind broad on the bow so as to avoid being caught broadside on. This prudential measure would have availed her nothing in case of the wind's shifting and taking her aback.

A deep rumbling sound was audible in the distance. The roar of ocean,— what can be compared to it? It is the great brutish howl of the universe. What we call matter, — that unsearchable organism, that amalgamation of incommensurable energies, in which can occasionally be detected an almost imperceptible degree of intention which makes us shudder; that blind, benighted cosmos; that enigmatical Pan, — has a cry, a strange cry, prolonged, obstinate, and continuous, which is between speech and thunder. That cry is the hurricane. Other and different voices, songs, melodies, clamours, tones, proceed from nests, from broods, from pairings, from nuptials, from homes. This trumpet-blast comes out of the Naught, which is All. Other voices express the soul of the universe; this expresses its brute power. It is the howl of the formless; it is the inarticulate uttered by the indefinite; it is a thing full of pathos and of terror. Those clamours resound above and beyond man. They rise, fall, undulate; form waves of sound; constitute all sorts of wild surprises for the mind; now burst close to the ear with the importunity of a peal of trumpets, now assail us with the rumbling hoarseness of distance,— giddy uproar which resembles a language, and which in fact is a language.

It is the effort which the world makes to speak; it is the lisping of the wonderful. In this wail is manifested vaguely all that the vast, dark palpitation endures, suffers, accepts, rejects. For the most part it talks nonsense; it is like an attack of chronic sickness. We fancy that we are witnessing the descent of supreme evil into the infinite. At moments we seem to discern a reclamation of the elements, some vain effort of chaos to re-assert itself over creation. At times it is a despairing moan; the void bewails and justifies itself. It is the pleading of the world's cause: we can fancy that the universe is engaged in a law-suit; we listen, we try to grasp the reasons given, the redoubtable for and against. Such a moaning among the shadows has the tenacity of a syllogism. Here is a vast field for thought; here is the *raison d'être* of mythologies and polytheisms. To the terror of these wild murmurs are added superhuman outlines melting away as they appear, — Eumenides which are almost distinct, throats of furies shaped in the clouds, Plutonian chimeras almost defined. No horrors can equal those sobs, those laughs, those tricks of tumult, those inscrutable questions and answers, those appeals to unknown aid. Man is utterly bewildered in the presence of that awful incantation; he bows under the enigma of those Draconian intonations. What latent meaning have they; what do they signify; what do they threaten; what do they implore? It would seem as though all bonds were loosened. Vociferations from precipice to precipice, from air to water, from wind to wave, from rain to rock, from zenith to nadir, from stars to foam; the abyss unmuzzled, — such is this tumult, complicated by some mysterious contest with evil consciences.

The loquacity of night is not less lugubrious than its silence. One feels in it the wrath of the unknown.

Night is a presence. The presence of what? For that matter we must distinguish between night and the shadowy. In the night there is the absolute; in the shadowy, the multiple. The night is one, the shadowy is made up of many. In this infinite and indefinite shadowy lives something or some one; but that which lives there forms part of our death. After our earthly career, when the shadowy will be clear to us, the life which is beyond will seize us; meanwhile it appears to touch and try us. Obscurity is a pressure. Night is, as it were, a hand placed on our soul; at certain hideous and solemn hours we feel that which is beyond the wall of the tomb encroaching on us.

Never does this proximity of the unknown seem more imminent than in storms at sea. The horrible combines with the fantastic. The possible interrupter of human actions, the old Cloud-compeller, has it in his power to mould, in whatsoever shape he chooses, the changing elements, the wild incoherence, and aimless force. That mystery the tempest is ever accepting and executing some unknown change of real or apparent will. Poets in all ages have called the waves capricious; but there is no such thing as caprice. The disconcerting enigmas in Nature which we call caprice, and in human life chance, are the results of unseen and incomprehensible laws

CHAPTER VIII.

NIX ET NOX.

THE chief characteristic of the snow-storm is its blackness. Nature's habitual aspect during a storm, the earth or sea black and the sky pale, is reversed: the sky is black, the ocean white; foam below, darkness above, — an horizon walled in with smoke; a zenith roofed with crape. The tempest resembles a cathedral hung with mourning; but there is no light in that cathedral, — no phantom lights on the crests of the waves, no spark, no phosphorescence, naught but a dense shadow. The polar cyclone differs from the tropical cyclone, inasmuch as the one sets fire to every light, and the other extinguishes them all. The world is suddenly converted into a vaulted cave. Out of the night falls a dust of pale spots, which hesitate between sky and sea. These spots, which are flakes of snow, slip, wander, and float. It is like the tears of a winding-sheet putting themselves into life-like motion. A mad wind mingles with this dissemination. Blackness crumbling into whiteness, the furious into the obscure, all the tumult of which the sepulchre is capable, a whirlwind under a catafalque, — such is the snow-storm. Underneath trembles the ocean, forming and reforming over portentous depths. In the polar wind, which is electrical, the flakes turn suddenly into hailstones, and the air becomes filled with projectiles; the water crackles, shot with grape. There are no thunder-claps; the light-

ning of boreal storms is silent. What is sometimes said of the cat, "It swears," may be applied to this lightning. It is a menace proceeding from a mouth half open, and strangely inexorable. The snow-storm is a storm blind and dumb; when it has passed, the ships also are often blind and the sailors dumb.

To escape from such danger is difficult. It would be wrong, however, to consider shipwreck inevitable. The Danish fishermen of Disco and the Balesin; the seekers of black whales; Hearn, steering towards Behring Strait to discover the mouth of Coppermine River; Hudson, Mackenzie, Vancouver, Ross, Dumont d'Urville, — all underwent almost at the pole itself the wildest hurricanes, and escaped out of them.

It was into this description of tempest that the hooker had entered, triumphant and under full sail. Frenzy against frenzy. When Montgomery, escaping from Rouen, drove his galley, with all the force of its oars, against the chain barring the Seine at La Bouille, he showed similar effrontery. The "Matutina" sailed on fast; she keeled over so much under her sails that at times she was at an angle of fifteen degrees with the sea; but her well-rounded keel adhered to the water as if glued to it. The keel resisted the grasp of the hurricane; the lantern at the prow still cast its light ahead. The clouds settled down more and more upon the sea around the hooker. Not a gull, not a sea-mew, was to be seen, — nothing but snow. The expanse of waves was becoming contracted and terrible; only three or four gigantic billows were visible. Now and then a tremendous flash of copper-coloured lightning broke out from behind the heavy masses of clouds on the horizon and in the zenith. This sudden burst of vermilion-flame showed the immense size and blackness of the clouds; while the brief illumination of ocean to which the first layer of

clouds and the distant boundaries of celestial chaos seemed to adhere plainly revealed the horrors of their immediate surroundings. Against this fiery background, the snow-flakes looked so black that they reminded one of dark butterflies darting about in a furnace; then, everything was once more veiled in gloom. The first explosion over, the squall, still in mad pursuit of the hooker, began a savage, continuous roar. Nothing could be more appalling than this sort of monologue of the tempest. The gloomy recitative seems intended to serve as a momentary rest for the contending forces, — a sort of truce maintained in the mighty deep.

The hooker held wildly on her course. Her two mainsails especially were doing wonderful work. The sky and sea were like ink compared with the jets of foam running higher than the mast. Every instant masses of water swept the deck like a deluge, and at each roll of the vessel the hawse-holes — now to starboard, now to larboard — became so many open mouths vomiting back foam into the sea. The women had taken refuge in the cabin, but the men remained on deck; the blinding snow eddied round, the surge mingling with it.

At that moment the chief of the band, standing abaft and holding with one hand to the shrouds, and with the other taking off the kerchief he wore round his head and waving it in the light of the lantern, gay and arrogant, with pride in his face, and his hair in wild disorder, cried out, —

"We are free!"

"Free, free, free!" echoed the fugitives, and the band, seizing hold of the rigging, rose up on deck.

"Hurrah!" shouted the chief.

And the band shouted in the storm, "Hurrah!"

Just as this clamour was dying away in the tempest

a loud, solemn voice rose from the other end of the vessel, saying, " Silence ! "

All turned their heads. The darkness was thick, and the doctor was leaning against the mast, so that he seemed part of it, and they could not see him.

The voice spoke again : " Listen ! "

All were silent. They distinctly heard through the darkness the tolling of a bell.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CHARGE CONFIDED TO A RAGING SEA.

THE captain, at the helm, burst out laughing: "A bell, that 's good! We are on the larboard tack. What does the bell prove? Why, that we have land to starboard."

The firm and measured voice of the doctor replied: "You have not land to starboard."

"But we have!" shouted the captain.

"No!"

"But that bell tolls from the land."

"That bell," said the doctor, "tolls from the sea."

A shudder passed over these daring men; the haggard faces of the two women appeared above the companion-way like two hobgoblins conjured up; the doctor took a step forward, separating his tall form from the mast. From the gloomy depths of night again resounded the dreary tolling of the bell.

The doctor resumed: "Half-way between Portland and the Channel Islands there is in the midst of the sea a buoy, placed there as a warning. The buoy is moored by chains to a rock, and floats on the top of the water. To the buoy is affixed an iron trestle, and across the trestle is hung a bell. In bad weather heavy seas toss the buoy, and the bell rings. That is the bell you hear."

The doctor, after pausing to allow an unusually violent gust of wind to subside, continued: "To hear that bell in a storm, when a nor'-wester is blowing, is to be lost.

Wherefore? For this reason: you hear the bell because the wind brings the sound to you. The wind is blowing from the northwest, and the rocks of Alderney lie to the east of us. You hear the bell only because you are between the buoy and the breakers. It is upon those rocks that the wind is driving you. You are on the wrong side of the buoy. If you were on the right side, you would be out at sea on a safe course, and you would not hear the bell; the wind would not convey the sound to you, — you might pass close to the buoy without knowing it. We are out of our course. That bell is shipwreck sounding the tocsin. Listen!"

As the doctor spoke, the bell, soothed by a lull of the storm, rang out slowly, stroke by stroke; and its dismal voice seemed to testify to the truth of the old man's words. It was perhaps their death-knell. All listened breathlessly, — now to the voice, now to the bell.

CHAPTER X.

THE COLOSSAL SAVAGE, THE STORM.

IN the mean time the captain had caught up his speaking-trumpet: "*Cargate todo, hombres!* Let go the shèets, man the down-hauls, lower ties and brails! Let us steer to the west, let us regain the high sea! Head for the buoy, steer for the bell; there 's an offing down there. We 've yet a chance."

"Try," said the doctor.

Let us remark here, by the way, that this buoy, a kind of bell-tower on the deep, was removed in 1802. There are yet alive very aged mariners who remember hearing it. It forewarned, but rather too late.

The orders of the captain were obeyed. The Languedocian made a third sailor. All bore a hand. Not satisfied with brailing up, they furled the sails; secured the clew-lines, bunt-lines, and leech-lines; clapped preventor-shrouds on the block-straps, which thus might serve as back-stays. They braced the mast; they battened down the ports and bulls' eyes, which is a method of walling up a ship. These evolutions, though executed in a lubberly fashion were nevertheless thoroughly effective. The hooker was stripped to bare poles. But in proportion as the vessel, stowing every stitch of canvas, became more helpless, the havoc of both winds and waves increased. The billows ran mountains high.

The hurricane, like an executioner hastening to his victim, began to dismember the craft. There came, in the twinkling of an eye, a dreadful crash; the top-sails were blown from the bolt-ropes, the chess-trees were hewn asunder, the deck was swept clear, the shrouds were carried away, the mast went by the board; all the lumber of the wreck was flying in shivers. The main shrouds also succumbed, although they were turned in and strongly stoppered. The magnetic currents common to snow-storms hastened the destruction of the rigging; it broke as much from the effects of these as from the violence of the wind. Most of the chain gear, fouled in the blocks, ceased to work. The bows and stern quivered under the terrific shocks. One wave washed overboard the compass and its binnacle; a second carried away the boat, which like a box slung under a carriage had been, in accordance with the quaint Asturian custom, lashed to the bowsprit; a third breaker wrenched off the sprit-sail yard; a fourth swept away the figure-head and signal-light. The rudder only was left. To replace the ship's bow-lantern they set fire to, and suspended at the stem, a large block of wood covered with oakum and tar. The broken mast, all bristling with splinters, ropes, blocks, and yards, cumbered the deck; in falling, it had stove in a plank of the starboard gunwale. The captain, still firm at the helm, shouted: "While we can steer, we have a chance! The lower planks hold good. Axes, axes! Overboard with the mast! Clear the decks!"

Both crew and passengers worked with the excitement of despair. A few strokes of the hatchets, and it was done. They pushed the mast over the side; the deck was cleared.

"Now," continued the captain, "take a rope's end and lash me to the helm."

They bound him to the tiller. While they were fastening him he laughed, and shouted, —

"Bellow, old hurdy-gurdy! bellow! I 've seen your equal off Cape Machichaco!"

And when secured, he clutched the helm with that strange hilarity which danger awakens, crying out, —

"All goes well, my lads! Long live our Lady of Buglose! Let us steer west."

An enormous wave came down abeam, and dashed against the vessel's side. There is always in storms a tiger-like wave, a billow fierce and decisive, which after attaining a certain height creeps horizontally over the surface of the waters for a time, then rises, roars, rages, and falling on the distressed vessel tears it limb from limb. A cloud of foam covered the entire deck of the "Matutina." A loud noise was heard above the confusion of darkness and waters. When the spray cleared off, and the stern again rose to view, the captain and the helm had disappeared. Both had been swept away. The helm and the man they had but just secured to it had passed with the wave into the hissing turmoil of the hurricane.

The chief of the band, gazing intently into the darkness, shouted: "Te burlas de nosotros?"

To this defiant exclamation there followed another cry: "Let go the anchor! Save the captain!"

They rushed to the capstan and let go the anchor. Hookers carry but one. In this case the anchor reached the bottom, but only to be lost; the bottom was of the hardest rock. The billows were raging with resistless force. The cable snapped like a thread; the anchor lay at the bottom of the sea. At the cutwater there remained only the cable end protruding from the hawsehole. From this moment the hooker became a wreck. The "Matutina" was irrevocably disabled. The vessel,

just before in full sail and almost formidable in her speed, was now helpless; all her evolutions were uncertain and executed at random; she yielded passively and like a log to the capricious fury of the waves.

The howling of the wind became more and more frightful. The bell on the sea rang despairingly, as if tolled by a weird hand. The "Matutina" drifted like a cork at the mercy of the waves. She sailed no longer, — she merely floated; every moment she seemed about to turn over on her back, like a dead fish. The good condition and perfectly water-tight state of the hull alone saved her from this disaster. Below the water-line not a plank had started; there was not a cranny, chink, nor crack; and she had not a single drop of water in the hold. This was lucky, as the pump, being out of order, was useless. The hooker pitched and rolled frightfully in the seething billows. The vessel had throes as of sickness, and seemed to be trying to belch forth the unhappy crew. Helpless they clung to the rigging, to the transoms, to the shank painters, to the gaskets, to the broken planks (the protruding nails of which tore their hands), to the warped riders, and to all the rugged projections on the stumps of the masts. From time to time they listened: the tolling of the bell came over the waters fainter and fainter, — one might have supposed that too was in distress. Finally the sound died away altogether.

Where were they, — at what distance from the buoy? The sound of the bell had frightened them; its silence terrified them. The northwester drove them forward in perhaps a fatal course. They felt themselves wafted on by maddened and ever-recurring gusts of wind. The wreck sped forward in the darkness. There is nothing more fearful than being hurried forward blindfold.

They felt the abyss before them, over them, under them. It was no longer a run, it was a rush. Suddenly, through the appalling density of the snow-storm, there loomed a red light.

"A lighthouse!" cried the crew.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CASKETS.

IT was the Caskets Light.

A lighthouse of the nineteenth century is a high cylinder of masonry, surmounted by scientifically constructed machinery for throwing light. The Casket lighthouse in particular is a white tower supporting three light-rooms. These three chambers revolve on clock-wheels, with such precision that the man on watch who sees them from sea can invariably take ten steps during their irradiation, and twenty-five during their eclipse. Everything is based on the focal plan and on the rotation of the octagon drum, which is formed of eight wide simple lenses in range, having above and below it two series of dioptric rings; it is protected from the violence of the winds and waves by glass a millimetre thick, yet sometimes broken by the sea-eagles, which dash themselves like great moths against these gigantic lanterns. The building which encloses and sustains this mechanism, and in which it is set, is also mathematically constructed. Everything about it is plain, exact, bare, precise, correct. A lighthouse is a mathematical figure.

In the seventeenth century a lighthouse was a sort of ornament to the sea-shore. The architecture of a lighthouse tower was magnificent and extravagant. It was covered with balconies, balusters, lodges, alcoves,

weather-cocks, — nothing but masks, statues, foliage, volutes, reliefs, figures large and small, medallions with inscriptions. "Pax in bello," said the Eddystone lighthouse. (We may as well observe, by the way, that this declaration of peace did not always disarm the ocean. Winstanley repeated it on a lighthouse which he constructed at his own expense, on a wild spot near Plymouth. The tower being finished, he shut himself up in it to have it tried by the tempest. The storm came, and carried off the lighthouse and Winstanley in it.) Such excessive adornment afforded too great a hold to the hurricane; as generals too brilliantly equipped in battle, draw the enemy's fire. Besides whimsical designs in stone, they were loaded with whimsical designs in iron, copper, and wood. On the sides of the lighthouse there jutted out, clinging to the walls among the arabesques, engines of every description, useful and useless, — windlasses, tackles, pullies, counterpoises, ladders, cranes, grapnels. On the pinnacle around the light, delicately wrought iron-work held great iron chandeliers, in which were placed pieces of rope steeped in resin, — wicks which burned doggedly, and which no wind extinguished; and from top to bottom the tower was covered by a complication of sea standards, banderoles, banners, flags, and pennons, which rose from stage to stage, from story to story, — a medley of all hues, all shapes, all heraldic devices, all signals, all confusion, up to the light-chamber, making in the storm a gay riot of colour about the blaze. This insolent light on the brink of the abyss seemed to breathe defiance, and inspired shipwrecked men with a spirit of daring.

But the Caskets Light was not one of this kind. It was at that period a primitive sort of lighthouse. Henry I. built it after the loss of the "White Ship." It was an unpretending tower perched upon a rock and

surmounted with a brazier enclosed by an iron railing, — a head of hair flaming in the wind. The only improvement made in this lighthouse since the twelfth century was a pair of forge-bellows worked by a pendulum and a stone weight, which had been added to the light-chamber in 1610.

The fate of the sea-birds that chanced to fly against these old lighthouses was more tragic than those of our days. The birds dashed against them, attracted by the light, and fell into the brazier, where they could be seen struggling like black spirits in a hell; at times they would fall back again between the railings upon the rock, smoking, lame, blind, like half-burnt flies out of a lamp.

To a full-rigged ship in good trim, answering readily to the pilot's handling, the Caskets Light is useful; it cries, "Look out!" It warns her of the shoal. To a disabled ship it is simply terrible. The hull, paralyzed and inert, with no defence against the fury of the storm or the mad heaving of the waves, — a fish without fins, a bird without wings, — can but go where the wind wills. The lighthouse reveals the end, points out the spot where it is doomed to disappear, and casts a ghastly light upon the place of burial. In short, it is but a funeral torch to illumine the yawning chasm, to warn against the inevitable. What more tragic mockery!

CHAPTER XII.

FACE TO FACE WITH THE ROCK.

THE wretched people on board the "Matutina" soon understood the derisive character of this warning. The sight of the lighthouse raised their spirits at first, then overwhelmed them with despair. Nothing could be done, nothing attempted. What has been said of kings, we may say of the waves, — we are their people, we are their prey. All their raving must be borne.

The nor'-wester was driving the hooker on the Caskets. They were nearing them; escape was impossible. They were drifting rapidly towards the reef; they felt that they were getting into shallow waters; the lead, if they could have thrown it to any purpose, would not have shown more than three or four fathoms. They heard the dull sound of the waves being sucked within the submarine caves of the steep rock. They made out, near the lighthouse, a deep cut between two granite walls, — the narrow passage leading into the ugly, wild-looking little harbour, supposed to be full of the skeletons of men and carcasses of ships. It looked like the mouth of a cave, rather than the entrance of a port. They could hear the crackling of the flames high up within the iron grating. A ghastly purple illuminated the storm; the collision of the rain and hail disturbed the mist. The black cloud and the red flame fought, serpent against serpent; live ashes, reft by the wind, flew from the fire, and the sudden assaults of the sparks

seemed to drive the snow-flakes before them. The ledge, blurred at first in outline, now stood out in bold relief, — a medley of rocks with peaks, crests, and vertebræ. As they neared it, the appearance of the reef became more and more forbidding. One of the women, the Irishwoman, told her beads wildly.

The chief was now acting as captain; for the Basques are equally at home on the mountain and the sea; they are bold on the precipice, and inventive in catastrophes. They were nearing the cliff. They were about to strike. Suddenly they came so close to the great rock north of the Caskets that it shut out the lighthouse from their view. They saw nothing but the rock and a red glare behind it. The huge rock looming in the mist was like a gigantic black woman with a hood of fire. This ill-famed rock is called the Biblet. It faces the north side of the reef, which on the south is faced by another ridge, L'Etacq-aux-giulmets. The chief looked at the Biblet and shouted, —

"A man with a will to take a rope to the rock! Who can swim?"

No answer. No one on board knew how to swim, not even the sailors, — an ignorance not uncommon among seafaring people. A beam nearly freed from its lashings was swinging loose. The chief seized it with both hands, crying, —

"Help me!"

They unlashed the beam. They had now at their disposal the very thing they wanted. Abandoning the defensive they assumed the offensive. It was a long beam of solid oak, sound and strong, useful either as a support or as a weapon, as a lever for a burden or a battering ram against a tower.

"Ready!" shouted the chief.

All six getting foothold on the stump of the mast,

threw their weight on the spar projecting over the side, and aimed straight as a lance towards a projection of the cliff. It was a dangerous manœuvre. To strike at a mountain is audacious indeed; the six men might have been thrown into the water by the shock. There is variety in struggles with storms. After the hurricane, the shoal; after the wind, the rock: first the intangible, then the immovable, to be encountered. Several minutes passed, such minutes as whiten men's hair. The rock and the vessel were about to come in collision; the rock awaited the blow like a culprit. A relentless wave rushed in; it ended the respite. It caught the vessel underneath, raised it, and swayed it for an instant as the sling swings its projectile.

"Steady!" cried the chief, "it is only a rock, and we are men!"

The beam was couched; the six men were one with it; its sharp bolts tore their arm-pits, but they did not feel them. The wave dashed the hooker against the rock. Then came the shock. It came under the cloud of foam which always hides such catastrophes. When the spray fell back into the sea, when the waves rolled back from the rock, the six men were rolling about the deck, but the "Matutina" was floating alongside the rock, clear of it. The beam had stood fast and turned the vessel aside. The sea was running so fast that in a few seconds the hooker had left the Caskets behind.

Such things sometimes occur. It was a straight stroke of the bowsprit that saved Wood of Largo at the mouth of the Tay. In the wild neighbourhood of Cape Winterton, and under the command of Captain Hamilton, it was the appliance of such a lever against the dangerous rock Branodu-um that saved the "Royal Mary" from shipwreck, although she was but a Scotch-built frigate. The force of the waves can be so abruptly

decomposed that changes in direction can be easily effected, or at least are possible even in the most violent collisions. The whole secret of avoiding shipwreck, is to try and pass from the secant to the tangent. Such was the service the beam rendered to the hooker; it had done the work of an oar, had taken the place of a rudder. But the manœuvre once performed could not be repeated. The beam was overboard; the shock of the collision had wrenched it out of the men's hands, and it was lost in the waves. To loosen another beam would have been to dismember the hull.

The hurricane swept the "Matutina" on. The light paled in the distance, faded, and disappeared. There was something mournful in its extinction. Layers of mist gradually sank down upon the now uncertain light; its rays died in the waste of waters; the flame floated, struggled, sank, and lost its form. It might have been a drowning creature. The brazier dwindled to the snuff of a candle; then naught remained save a faint uncertain glimmer. It was like the quenching of light in the pit of night.

The bell which had threatened was dumb; the lighthouse which had threatened had melted away. And yet it was more awful now that they had ceased to threaten. One was a voice, the other a torch. There was something human about them. They were gone, and naught remained but the mighty deep.

CHAPTER XIII.

FACE TO FACE WITH NIGHT.

AGAIN was the hooker running with the shadow into immeasurable darkness. The "Matutina," escaped from the Caskets, sank and rose from billow to billow, a respite, but in chaos. Spun around by the wind, tossed by all the thousand motions of the wave, she reflected every mad oscillation of the sea. She scarcely pitched at all, — a terrible symptom in a ship in distress. Wrecks merely roll; pitching is a sign of strife. The helm alone can turn a vessel to the wind.

Mists, whirlwinds, gales, motion in all directions, no shelter, gulf succeeding gulf, no horizon visible, intense blackness for background, — through all these the hooker drifted. To have got free of the Caskets, to have escaped the rock, was a victory for the shipwrecked men; but it was a victory which left them in a sort of stupor. They had raised no cheer; at sea such an impudence is not repeated twice. To throw down a challenge where they could not cast the lead, would have been too serious a jest. The shipwreck averted was an impossibility achieved; they were petrified by it. By degrees, however, they began to hope again. Such are the mirages of the soul! There is no distress so complete but that even in the most critical moments the inexplicable sunrise of hope is seen in its depths. These poor wretches were ready to declare to themselves that they were saved. The words were almost on their lips.

But suddenly something terrible appeared before them in the darkness. On the port bow arose a tall, perpendicular, opaque mass, a square tower as it were. They gazed at it, open-mouthed. The storm was driving them straight towards it. They knew not what it was. It was the Ortach rock emerging from the depths of ocean.

CHAPTER XIV.

ORTACH.

DANGER was imminent again. After the Caskets comes Ortach. The storm is no artist; brutal and all-powerful, it never varies its appliances. The darkness is inexhaustible; its snares and perfidies never come to an end. As for man, he soon comes to the end of his resources. Man exhausts his strength, the abyss never. The shipwrecked men turned towards the chief, their hope. He could only shrug his shoulders. Dismal contempt of helplessness.

The Ortach, a single huge rock, rises in a straight line eighty feet above the angry beating of the waves. Waves and ships break against it. An immovable cube, it plunges its rectilinear planes into the numberless serpentine curves of the sea. At night it looks like an enormous block resting on the folds of a huge black sheet. In time of storm it awaits the stroke of the axe, — that is, the thunderbolt. But there is never a thunderbolt during a snow-storm. True, the ship has a bandage over her eyes; she is like one prepared for the scaffold. As for the lightning-bolt which puts one quickly out of one's misery, that is not to be hoped for.

The "Matutina," little better now than a log upon the waters, drifted towards this rock, as she had drifted towards the other. The poor wretches on board, who had for a moment believed themselves saved, relapsed into misery. The destruction they thought they had

left behind them confronted them again. The reef reappeared from the bottom of the sea. Nothing had been gained.

The Caskets are a goffering iron with a thousand subdivisions; the Ortach is a solid wall. To be wrecked on the Caskets is to be cut into ribbons; to strike on the Ortach is to be crushed into powder. Nevertheless there was one chance. On a straight frontage like that of the Ortach, neither the wave nor the cannon-ball can ricochet. The operation is simple,—first the flux, then the reflux; a wave advances, a billow returns. In such cases the question of life and death is balanced thus: if the wave carries the vessel on the rock, she breaks on it and is lost; if the billow retires before the ship has touched, she is carried back,—she is saved.

It was a moment of intense anxiety. Those on board saw through the gloom the great decisive wave bearing down on them. How far was it going to drag them? If the wave broke upon the ship, they would be carried on the rock and dashed to pieces. If it passed under the ship— The wave *did* pass under. They breathed again.

But what of the recoil? What would the surf do with them? The surf carried them back. A few minutes later the "Matutina" was out of the breakers. The Ortach faded from their view, as the Caskets had done. It was their second victory. For the second time the hooker had verged on destruction, and had drawn back in time.

CHAPTER XV.

PORTENTOSUM MARE.

MEANWHILE a thickening mist had descended on the drifting wretches. They were ignorant of their whereabouts, they could scarcely see a cable's length around. Despite a furious storm of hail which forced them to bow their heads, the women had obstinately refused to go below again. No one, however hopeless, but wishes, if shipwreck be inevitable, to meet it in the open air. When so near death, a ceiling above one's head seems like the first outline of a coffin.

They were now in a short and chopping sea. A turgid sea indicates its constraint. Even in a fog the entrance to a strait may be known by the boiling appearance of the waves. And it was so in this case, for they were unconsciously skirting the coast of Alderney. Between the Caskets and Ortach on the west and Alderney on the east, the sea is cramped and hemmed in. In this uncomfortable position the sea suffers like anything else; and when it suffers, it is irritable. Consequently, that channel is a thing to fear. The "Matutina" was in that channel now.

Imagine under the sea a tortoise shell as big as Hyde Park or the Champs Elysées, of which every striature is a shoal, and every embossment a reef. Such is the western approach of Alderney. The sea covers and conceals this shipwrecking apparatus. On this conglomeration of submarine breakers the cloven waves leap and

foam, in calm weather a chopping sea, in storms a chaos reigns. The shipwrecked men observed this new complication without endeavouring to explain it to themselves. Suddenly they understood it. A pale vista broadened in the zenith; a wan tinge overspread the sea; the livid light revealed on the port side a long shoal stretching eastward, towards which the power of the rushing wind was driving the vessel. What was that shoal? They shuddered. They would have shuddered even more had a voice answered them, "Alderney!"

No other isle is so well defended against man's approach as Alderney. Below and above water it is protected by a savage guard, of which Ortach is the outpost. To the west are Burhou, Sauteriaux, Anfroque, Niangle, Fond du Croc, Les Jumelles, La Grosse, La Clanque, Les Eguillons, Le Vrac, La Fosse-Malière; to the east, Sauquet, Hommeau Floreau, La Brinebetais, La Queslingue, Croquelihou, La Fourche, Le Saut, Noire Pute, Coupie, Orbue. These are hydra-headed monsters of the protecting reef. One of these reefs is called Le But, — the Goal,— as if to imply that every voyage ends there. This obstruction, simplified by night and sea, looked to the shipwrecked men like a single dark belt of rocks, a sort of blot on the horizon.

Shipwreck is the height of helplessness. To be near land, and unable to reach it; to float, yet not to be able to do so in any desired direction; to rest the foot on what seems firm and is fragile; to be full of life, and yet o'ershadowed by death; to be a prisoner in space; to be walled in between sky and ocean; to have the infinite overhead like a dungeon; to be encompassed by the treacherous winds and waves; to be seized, bound, paralyzed, — such a load of misfortune stupefies and crushes us. We imagine that in it we catch a glimpse of the sneer of the opponent who is beyond our reach.

That which holds you fast is that which releases the birds and sets the fishes free. It seems nothing, and is everything. We are dependent on the air which is ruffled by our mouths; we are dependent on the water which we catch in the hollow of our hands. Draw a glassful from the storm, and it is but a cup of bitterness; a mouthful is nausea, a waveful is extermination. The grain of sand in the desert, the foam-flake on the sea, are fearful symptoms. Omnipotence takes no care to hide its atom; it changes weakness into strength; and it is with the infinitely little that the infinitely great crushes you. It is with its drops that the ocean overwhelms you. You feel you are a plaything. A plaything: ghastly epithet!

The "Matutina" was a little above Alderney, which was not an unfavourable position; but she was drifting towards its northern point, which was fatal. As a bent bow discharges its arrow, the nor'-wester was shooting the vessel towards the northern cape. Off that point, a little beyond the harbour of Corbelets, is that which the seamen of the Norman archipelago call a "singe," — that is, a current. The "singe" is a furious kind of current. A wreath of funnels in the shallows produces a wreath of whirlpools on the surface. You escape one only to fall into another. A ship caught hold of by the "singe" whirls round and round until some sharp rock cleaves her hull; then the shattered vessel stops, her stern rises from the waves, the bow completes the revolution in the abyss, the stern sinks in, and the entire wreck is sucked down. The circle of foam broadens, and nothing is seen on the surface of the waves but a few bubbles here and there.

The three most dangerous currents in the whole Channel are — one close to the well-known Girdler Sands; one at Jersey between the Pignonnet and the Point of Noirmont; and that of Alderney.

Had a local pilot been on board the "Matutina," he could have warned them of their fresh peril. In place of a pilot, they had their instinct. In situations of extreme danger men are endowed with second sight. Without knowing exactly what awaited them, they approached the spot with horror. How could they double that cape? They had no means of doing it. Just as they had seen, first the Caskets, then Ortach, loom up before them, they now saw the point of Alderney, all of steep rock. It was like a number of giants rising up one after another to offer them battle. Charybdis and Scylla make but two; the Caskets, Ortach, and Alderney make three. The phenomenon of the horizon, invaded by the rocks, was again repeated with the grand monotony of the deep. The battles of the ocean have the same sublime tautology as the combats of Homer. Each wave, as they neared it, added twenty cubits to the apparent cape, already greatly magnified by the mist; the fast decreasing distance seemed to render destruction more and more inevitable. They were on the edge of the seething current already! The first ripple that seized them would drag them in; another wave surmounted, and all would be over!

Suddenly the hooker was driven back, as if by a blow from a Titan's fist. The wave reared up under the vessel and fell back, throwing the waif back in its mane of foam. The "Matutina," thus impelled, drifted away from Alderney. She was again on the open sea. Whence had come the succour? From the wind. The breath of the storm had changed its direction. The wave had made them its toy; now it was the wind's turn. They had saved themselves from the Caskets. Off Ortach it was the wave which had been their friend; now it was the wind. The wind had suddenly veered from north to south. A sou'-wester had succeeded the nor'-wester

The current is the wind in the waters; the wind is the current in the air. These two forces had just counteracted each other, and it had been the wind's will to snatch its prey from the current.

The whims of ocean are incomprehensible; they are, perhaps, an embodiment of the perpetual. When one is at their mercy one can neither hope nor despair. They do and then undo. The ocean amuses itself. Every shade of wild, untamed ferocity is phased in the vast and cunning sea, which Jean Bart used to call "that big brute." To its claws and their gashings succeed soft intervals of velvet paws. Sometimes the storm hurries on a wreck, at others it works out the problem with care; it might almost be said that it lingers over it. The sea can afford to take its time, as its victims learn to their cost.

We must own that occasionally these lulls in the torture announce deliverance. Such cases are rare. However this may be, men in extreme peril are quick to believe in rescue; the slightest cessation in the storm's threats is sufficient,—they tell themselves that they are out of danger. After believing themselves as good as buried, they announce their resurrection. It appears that their luck has turned; they declare themselves satisfied; they are saved; they cry quits with God.

The sou'-wester set in with a whirlwind. Shipwrecked men have never any but rough helpers. The "Matutina" was dragged rapidly out to sea by the remains of her rigging, like a dead woman trailed by the hair. It was like the freedom granted by Tiberius, at the price of violation. The wind treated with brutality those whom it saved; it rendered service with fury; it gave help without pity. The wreck was breaking up under the severity of its deliverers. Hailstones, big and hard enough to charge a blunderbuss, smote the vessel:

at every rise and fall of the waves these hailstones rolled about the deck like marbles. The hooker, whose deck was almost even with the water was being beaten out of shape by the heavy sea and its clouds of spray. On board it each man was for himself. They clung on as best they could. As each sea swept over them, it was with a sense of surprise that they saw that all were still there. Several had their faces torn by splinters. Happily despair makes stout hands. In terror a child's hand has the grasp of a giant; agony makes a vice of a woman's fingers; a girl in her fright can almost bury her rose-coloured fingers in a piece of iron. With hooked fingers they hung on somehow, as the waves dashed over them; but each wave increased their fear of being swept away.

But their fears were suddenly relieved.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PROBLEM SUDDENLY WORKS IN SILENCE.

THE hurricane ended as abruptly as it began. In a minute or two there was no longer sou'-wester or nor'-wester in the air. The fierce clarions of space were mute. The whole of the water-spout had poured from the sky without any sign of diminution, as if it had slided perpendicularly into a gulf beneath. Snow-flakes took the place of hailstones; the snow began to fall slowly. There was no more swell; the sea quieted down.

Such sudden cessations are peculiar to snow-storms. The electric influence exhausted, everything becomes still, — even the sea, which in ordinary storms often remains agitated for a long time. In snow-storms it is not so. There is then no prolonged disturbance in the deep. Like a weary worker it becomes drowsy directly, — thus almost giving the lie to the laws of statics, but not astonishing old seamen, who know that the sea is full of unforeseen surprises. The same phenomenon takes place, although very rarely, in ordinary storms. Thus, in our own time, on the occasion of the memorable hurricane of July 27, 1867, at Jersey the wind, after fourteen hours' fury, suddenly relapsed into a dead calm.

In a few minutes the hooker was floating on sleeping waters. At the same time (for the last phase of these storms resembles the first) the crew could distinguish nothing; all that had been made visible in the convul-

sions of the meteoric cloud was again dark. Pale outlines were fused in vague mist, and the gloom of infinite space closed in around the vessel. Walls of inky blackness surrounded the "Matutina," and with the grim deliberation of an encroaching iceberg were slowly but surely closing in around her. In the zenith nothing was visible; a lid of fog seemed to be closing down upon the vessel. It was as if the hooker were at the bottom of an unfathomable abyss. The sea was like a puddle of molten lead. No movement was perceptible in the waters,—ominous immobility! The ocean is never less tame than when it is still as a pool. All was silence, stillness, darkness. Perchance the silence of inanimate objects is taciturnity. The deck was horizontal, with an insensible slope to the sides. A few broken planks were sliding about. The block on which they had lighted the tow steeped in tar, in place of the signal-light which had been washed away, no longer swung at the prow, and no longer let fall burning drops into the sea. What little breeze remained in the clouds was noiseless. The snow fell thickly, softly, and almost perpendicularly. No sound of breakers could be heard. The quiet of midnight was over all.

This profound peace succeeding such terrific tempests and frenzied efforts was, for these poor creatures so long tossed about, an unspeakable comfort; it was as though the punishment of the rack had ceased. It seemed an assurance that they would be saved. They regained confidence. All that had been fury was now tranquillity. It appeared to them a pledge of peace. Their wretched hearts swelled with hope. They were able to let go the end of rope or beam to which they had clung, to rise, straighten themselves up, stand erect, and move about. They felt inexpressibly relieved. There are in the depths of darkness such phases of paradise, preparations for

other things. It was evident that they were delivered from the storm, from the foam, from the wind, from the uproar. Henceforth all the chances were in their favour. In three or four hours it would be sunrise. They would be seen by some passing ship; they would be rescued. The worst was over, they were re-entering life. The important feat was to have been able to keep afloat until the cessation of the tempest. They said to themselves, "It is all over now."

Suddenly they found that all was indeed over. One of the sailors, the northern Basque, Galdeazun by name, going down into the hold to look for a rope, came hurriedly up again and exclaimed, —

"The hold is full!"

"Of what?" asked the chief.

"Of water," answered the sailor.

"What does that mean?" cried the chief.

"It means," replied Galdeazun, "that in half an hour we shall be at the bottom of the sea."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LAST RESOURCE.

THERE was a hole in the keel. A leak had been sprung. When it happened no one could tell. Was it when they touched the Caskets? Was it off Ortach? Was it when they were whirled about on the shoal west of Alderney? It was most probable that they had struck against some hidden rock, the shock of which they had not felt in the midst of the convulsive fury of the wind which was tossing them about. When one has tetanus who would feel a pin-prick?

The other sailor, the southern Basque, whose name was Ave Maria, also went down into the hold, and returning to the deck said: "There are six feet of water in the hold;" and added, "In less than forty minutes we shall sink."

Where was the leak? They could not find it. It was hidden by the water which was filling the hold. The vessel had a hole in her hull somewhere below the water-line, quite forward in the keel. Impossible to find it, impossible to check it. They had a wound which they could not stanch. The water, however, was not rising very fast.

The chief called out: "We must work the pump!"

Galdeazun replied: "We have no pump left."

"Then," said the chief, "we must make for land."

"Where is the land?"

"I don't know."

"Nor I."

"But it must be somewhere."

"True enough."

"Let some one steer for it."

"We have no pilot."

"Take the tiller yourself."

"We have lost the tiller."

"Let 's rig one out of the first beam we can lay hands on. Nails — a hammer — quick — some tools."

"The carpenter's box went overboard; we have no tools."

"We 'll steer all the same; no matter where."

"The rudder is lost."

"Where is the boat? We 'll get in that and row."

"The boat is gone too."

"We 'll row the wreck."

"We have lost all our oars."

"We 'll have to depend upon our sails then."

"We have lost our sails, and the mast as well."

"We 'll rig one up with a pole and a tarpaulin. Let 's get out of this, and trust to the wind."

"There is no wind."

The wind, indeed, had deserted them, the storm had fled, and its departure, which they had believed to mean safety, meant in fact destruction. Had the sou'-wester continued, it might have driven them wildly on some shore, might have beaten the leak in speed, might perhaps have carried them to some propitious sandbank, and cast them on it before the hooker foundered. The fury of the storm, bearing them onward, might have enabled them to reach land; but no wind now meant no hope. They were going to die because the hurricane was over. The end was near!

Wind, hail, the hurricane, the whirlwind, — these are wild combatants that may be overcome; the storm can be taken in the weak point of its armour; there are resources against the violence which is often off its guard, and often hits wide of the mark. But nothing can be done against a calm; there is nothing tangible which

you can lay hold upon. The winds are like Cossacks: stand your ground and they will disperse. Calms remind one of an executioner's pincers.

The water crept up higher and higher in the hold; and as it rose, the vessel sank, — slowly but surely. Those on board the wreck of the "Matutina" felt that most hopeless of catastrophes, — an inert catastrophe undermining them. The grim certainty of their fate petrified them. No stir in the air, no movement on the sea. The motionless is the inexorable. Absorption was sucking them down silently. Through the depths of the silent waters — without anger, without passion, not willing, not knowing, not caring — the fatal centre of the globe was drawing them downwards. It was no longer the wide-open mouth of the sea, the fierce jaws of the wind and the wave, that threatened them; it was as if the wretched beings had under them the black gulf of the infinite. They felt themselves slowly sinking into oblivion. The distance between the deck and the water was lessening, — that was all. They could calculate her disappearance to the moment. It was the exact reverse of submersion by the rising tide. The water was not rising towards them, they were sinking into it. They were digging their own grave. Their own weight was their sexton. Their fate was sealed, not by the laws of man, but by the laws of Nature.

The snow continued to fall, and as the wreck was now perfectly motionless, it was covered as with a winding-sheet. The hold was becoming fuller and deeper. There was no way of getting at the leak. They struck a light and fixed three or four torches in holes as best they could. Galdeazun brought some old leathern buckets, and they tried to bale the hold out, standing in a row to pass the buckets from hand to hand; but the buckets were past use; the leather of some was unstitched, there

were holes in the bottoms of others, and the buckets emptied themselves on the way. The difference in quantity between the water which was making its way in and that which they returned to the sea was ludicrous; for a hogshead that entered, a glassful was baled out; so they did not improve their condition. It was like a miser trying to spend a million, half-penny by half-penny.

The chief said, "Let us lighten the wreck."

During the storm they had lashed together the few chests which were on deck. These remained tied to the stump of the mast. They undid the lashings, and rolled the chests overboard through a breach in the gunwale. One of these trunks belonged to the Basque woman, who could not repress a groan as she saw it going, exclaiming. —

"Oh, my new cloak lined with scarlet! Oh, my poor open-work stockings! Oh, my silver earrings to wear at Mass on May-day!"

The deck cleared, the cabin had next to be seen to. It was greatly encumbered, as the reader may remember, by the luggage belonging to the passengers, and by the bales belonging to the sailors. They took the luggage, and threw it over the gunwale. They carried up the bales, and cast them into the sea. The lantern, the barrels, the sacks of provisions, the bales, and the water-butts, even the pot of soup, — all went over into the waves. They unscrewed the nuts of the iron stove, in which the fire had long since gone out, hoisted it on deck, dragged it to the side of the vessel, and threw it overboard. They cast overboard everything they could pull out of the deck, — chains, shrouds, and torn rigging.

From time to time the chief took a torch, and throwing its light on the figures painted on the prow looked to see how much the wreck had settled down.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HIGHEST RESOURCE.

THE wreck being lightened was sinking more slowly, but none the less surely. The hopelessness of their situation was without mitigation; they had exhausted their last resource.

"Is there anything else we can throw overboard?" asked one.

The doctor, whom every one had forgotten, rose from the companion-way and answered: "Yes."

"What?" asked the chief.

"Our crime," replied the doctor.

They shuddered, and all cried out: "Amen."

The doctor standing up, pale as death, raised his hand to heaven, saying: "Kneel down."

They all prepared to kneel.

The doctor went on. "Let us throw our crimes into the sea, they weigh us down; it is they that are sinking the ship. Let us cease to think of safety; let us think only of salvation. Our last crime, — the crime which we committed, or rather completed, just now, — O wretched beings who are listening to me, it is that which is overwhelming us! For those who leave intended murder behind them, it is the height of audacity to tempt the mighty deep. He who sins against a child, sins against God. True, we were obliged to put to sea, but it was certain perdition. The storm, warned by the shadow of our crime, came upon us. It is well.

Regret nothing, however. There, not far off in the darkness, are the sands of Vauville and Cape La Hogue on the coast of France. There was but one possible shelter for us, — that was Spain. France was no less dangerous to us than England. Our deliverance from the sea would have led only to the gibbet. We had no alternative but to be hanged or drowned. God has chosen for us; let us give him thanks. He has vouchsafed us the grave which cleanses. Brethren, the hand of God is in it. Remember that we just now did our best to send that child on high, and that at this very moment, as I speak, there is, perhaps, in the world above a soul accusing us before a Judge whose eye is upon us. Let us make the best use of this last respite; let us make an effort, if time be granted us, to repair, as far as possible, the evil that we have done. If the child survives us, let us do what we can to aid him; if he is dead, let us seek his forgiveness. Let us cast our sins from us. Let us ease our consciences of this load. Let us pray that our souls be not cast out from the presence of Almighty God, for that is the worst of shipwrecks. Bodies go to the fishes, souls to the Evil One. Have pity on yourselves. Kneel down, I tell you. Repentance is the only bark which never sinks. You have lost your compass; you have gone sadly astray; but you can still pray."

The wolves had become lambs: such transformations often occur at the hour of death. Even tigers lick the crucifix. When the dark portals of the grave yawn, to believe is difficult, not to believe is impossible. However unsatisfactory the different religious creeds of mankind may be, no matter how little they correspond with his conception of the life hereafter, the boldest soul quails when the moment of final dissolution comes. There *must* be something that begins when this life

ends. This thought impresses itself upon the mind of the dying.

Death is the end of each man's term of probation. In that fatal hour he realizes the burden of responsibility that rests upon every human soul. That which has been decides what is to be. The past returns, and enters into the future. The known becomes as terrifying as the unknown; it is the confusion of the two which so terrifies the dying man.

These poor wretches had abandoned all hope so far as this life was concerned, so they turned their thoughts to the other. Their only remaining chance was in its dark shadow, and they understood this fact perfectly. "Speak, speak!" they cried out to the doctor; "there is no one else to tell us. We will obey thee. What must we do! Speak!"

The doctor answered: "The question is how to pass over the unknown precipice and reach the shores of the unknown world beyond the tomb. Being the wisest among you, my danger is greater than yours. You do well to leave the choice of the bridge to him whose burden is the heaviest. For knowledge only increases one's responsibility. How much time have we left?"

Galdeazun looked at the water-mark, and answered: "A little more than a quarter of an hour."

"Good," said the doctor.

The low roof of the companion-way on which he was leaning served as a sort of table. The doctor took from his pocket his inkhorn and pen, and drew from his pocket-book a piece of parchment, the same on which he had written, a few hours before, some twenty cramped and crooked lines. "A light," he said.

The snow, falling like the spray of a cataract, had extinguished the torches one after another; there was but one left. Ave Maria took it out of the place where

it had been stuck, and holding it in his hand, came and stood by the doctor's side.

The doctor replaced his pocket-book in his pocket, set the pen and inkhorn on the top of the companion-way, unfolded the parchment, and said: "Listen."

Then in the midst of the sea, on the sinking deck (a sort of quaking flooring of the tomb), the doctor began a solemn reading, to which all the shadows seemed to listen. The doomed men bowed their heads around him. The flickering light of the torch intensified their pallor. What the doctor read was written in English. Now and then, when one of those woe-begone looks seemed to ask an explanation, the doctor would stop, and repeat, either in French, Spanish, Basque, or Italian, the passage he had just read Stifled sobs and hollow beatings of the breast were heard. The wreck was sinking more and more.

The reading over, the doctor placed the parchment flat on the companion-way, seized his pen, and on a clear margin which he had carefully left at the bottom of what he had written, he signed himself: "Gerhadus Geestemunde: Doctor."

Then turning towards the others, he said: "Come, and sign."

The Basque woman approached, took the pen, and signed herself, "Asuncion." She handed the pen to the Irish woman, who, not knowing how to write, made a cross. The doctor, by the side of this cross, wrote, "Barbara Fermoy, of Tyrrif Island, in the Hebrides." Then he handed the pen to the chief of the band. The chief signed, "Gaizdorra: Captal." The Genoese signed himself under the chief's name, "Giangirate." The Languedocian signed, "Jacques Quartourze: *alias* the Narbonnais." The Provençal signed, "Luc-Pierre Capgaroupe, of the Galleys of Mahon."

Under these signatures the doctor added a note: "Of the crew of three men, the captain having been washed overboard by a sea, but two remain, and they have signed."

The two sailors affixed their names underneath the note. The northern Basque signed himself, "Galdeazun." The southern Basque signed, "Ave Maria: Thief."

Then the doctor said: "Capgaroupe."

"Here," said the Provençal.

"Have you Hardquanonne's flask?"

"Yes."

"Give it me."

Capgaroupe drank off the last mouthful of brandy, and handed the flask to the doctor.

The water was rising in the hold; the wreck was sinking deeper into the sea. The sloping edges of the ship were covered by a thin wave, which was rising. All were crowded on the centre of the deck.

The doctor dried the ink on the signatures by the flame of the torch, and folding the parchment into a narrower compass than the diameter of the neck, put it into the flask, and called for the cork.

"I don't know where it is," said Capgaroupe.

"Here is a piece of rope," said Jacques Quartourze.

The doctor corked the flask with a bit of rope, and asked for some tar. Galdeazun went forward, extinguished the signal-light, took the vessel which had held it from the stern, and brought it, half full of burning pitch, to the doctor. The flask containing the parchment which they had all signed was carefully corked and tarred over.

"It is done," said the doctor.

And from every mouth, faltered in every language, came as if from the tomb such dismal utterances as "Ainsi soit-il!"

"Meâ culpâ!"
"Asi sea!"
"Aro raï!"
"Amen!"

It was as though the gloomy voices of Babel were resounding through the shadows as Heaven uttered its awful refusal to hear them.

The doctor turned away from his companions in crime and distress, and took a few steps towards the gunwale. Reaching the side, he looked into space, and said, in a deep voice: "Bist du bei mir?" Perchance he was addressing some phantom.

The wreck was sinking. All the others stood as in a dream. Prayer mastered them by main force. They not only knelt, they cowered. There was something involuntary in their contrition; they wavered as a sail flaps when the breeze fails. And the haggard group took by degrees, with clasping of hands and prostration of foreheads, various attitudes expressive of profound humiliation. Some strange reflection of the deep seemed to soften their villainous features.

The doctor returned towards them. Whatever his past may have been, the old man was truly great in the presence of the catastrophe. He was not a man to be taken unawares. Brooding over him was the calm of a silent horror; on his countenance was the majesty of God's will comprehended. This old and thoughtful outlaw unconsciously assumed the air of a pontiff.

"Listen to me," he said solemnly. He contemplated the waste of water for a moment, and added: "We are about to die!"

Then he took the torch from the hands of Ave Maria, and waved it. A spark broke from it and flew into the night. Then the doctor cast the torch into the sea. It was extinguished: every glimmer of light had disap-

peared. Nothing remained but the dense, unfathomable gloom. It was like the very grave itself.

In the darkness, the doctor was heard saying: "Let us pray."

All knelt down. It was no longer on the snow, but in the water, that they knelt. They had but a few minutes more to live. The doctor alone remained standing. The flakes of snow falling on him had sprinkled him as if with white tears, and made him plainly visible against the background of darkness. He made the sign of the cross and raised his voice, while beneath his feet he felt that almost imperceptible oscillation which precedes the moment in which a wreck is about to founder. He said:—

"Pater noster qui es in cœlis."

"Notre Père qui êtes aux cieux," the Provençal repeated in French.

"Ar nathair ata ar neamh," repeated the Irish woman in Gaelic, understood by the Basque woman.

"Sanctificetur nomen tuum," continued the doctor.

"Que votre nom soit sanctifié," said the Provençal.

"Naomhthar hainm," said the Irish woman.

"Adveniat regnum tuum," continued the doctor.

"Que votre règne arrive," said the Provençal.

"Tigeadh do rioghachd," said the Irish woman.

As they knelt, the water had risen to their shoulders.

"Fiat voluntas tua," the doctor went on.

"Que votre volonté soit faite," stammered the Provençal.

"Deuntar do thoil ar an Hhalàmb," cried the Irish woman and Basque woman.

"Sicut in cœlo, sicut in terra," said the doctor.

No voice answered him. He looked down. Every head was under water. They had allowed themselves to be drowned on their knees.

The doctor took in his right hand the flask which he had placed on the companion-way and raised it high above his head. The wreck was going down. As he sank, the doctor murmured the rest of the prayer. For an instant his shoulders were above water; then his head; then nothing remained but his arm holding up the flask, as if he were showing it to the Infinite. Then his arm disappeared; there was no more of a ripple on the sea than there would have been on a cask of oil. The snow continued to fall.

One thing floated, and was carried by the waves into the darkness. It was the tarred flask, kept afloat by its osier cover.

BOOK III.

THE CHILD IN THE SHADOW.

CHAPTER I.

CHESIL.

THE storm was no less severe on land than on sea. The same wild strife among the elements had taken place around the abandoned child. The weak and innocent become their sport in the exhibitions of frantic rage in which they sometimes indulge. Shadows see not, and inanimate things have not the clemency they are supposed to possess.

On the land there was but little wind; yet there was an inexplicable dumbness in the cold. There was no hail; but the thickness of the falling snow was fearful. Hailstones strike, harass, bruise, stun, crush; snow-flakes do worse. Soft and inexorable, the snow-flake does its work in silence. Touch it, and it melts. It is pure, even as the hypocrite is candid. It is by tiny particles slowly heaped one upon another that the snow-flake becomes an avalanche and the knave a criminal.

The child continued to advance in the mist: mist, like snow, is full of treachery. Though ill-fitted to cope with all these perils, he had succeeded in reaching the bottom of the descent, and had gained Chesil. Without knowing it he was on an isthmus, with water on

either side; so that he could not lose his way in the fog, in the snow, or in the darkness, without falling into the deep waters of the gulf on the right hand, or into the raging billows of the sea on the left. He was travelling on, in blissful ignorance, between these two abysses.

The Isthmus of Portland was at that time extremely sharp and rugged. No sign of its former configuration remains to-day. Since the idea of manufacturing Portland stone into cement was first conceived, the cliffs have been subjected to operations which have completely changed their original appearance. Calcareous lias, slate, and trap are still to be found there, rising from layers of conglomerate like teeth out of a gum. But the pickaxe has broken up and levelled those bristling, rugged peaks which were once the homes of the eagles. The summits no longer exist where the labbes and the skua gulls used to flock, soaring, like the envious, to sully high places. In vain you seek the tall monolith called Godolphin, — an old British word signifying "white eagle." In summer you may still gather on these cliffs (pierced and perforated like a sponge) rosemary, pennyroyal, wild hyssop, and sea-fennel, which when infused makes a good cordial, and that herb full of knots, which grows in the sand and from which they make matting; but you no longer find grey amber or black tin, or that triple species of slate, — one sort green, one blue, and the third the colour of sage-leaves. The foxes, the badgers, the otters, and the martens have taken themselves off; on the cliffs of Portland, as well as at the extremity of Cornwall, where there were at one time chamois, none remain. The people still fish in some inlets for plaice and pilchards; but the shy salmon no longer ascend the Wey, between Michaelmas and Christmas, to spawn. Nor can one see there, as

during the reign of Elizabeth, those nameless birds as large as hawks, who cut an apple in two, but ate only the pips. You never meet those crows with yellow beaks, called in English Cornish choughs (*pyrrocorax* in Latin), who mischievously drop burning twigs on thatched roofs; nor that magic bird the fulmar, a wanderer from the Scottish archipelago, dropping from his bill an oil which the islanders used to burn in their lamps. Nor do you ever find in the evening, in the plash of the ebbing tide, that ancient, legendary neitse, with the feet of a hog and the bleat of a calf. The tide no longer throws up the whiskered seal, with its curled ears and sharp jaws, dragging itself along on its nailless paws. On the Portland cliffs, so changed nowadays as to be scarcely recognizable the absence of forests precluded nightingales; and now the falcon, the swan, and the wild goose have fled. The sheep of Portland, nowadays, are fat and have fine wool; the few scattered ewes which nibbled the salt grass there two centuries ago were small and tough, and coarse of fleece, as became Celtic flocks brought there by garlic-eating shepherds who lived to a hundred, and who at the distance of half a mile could pierce a cuirass with their yard-long arrows. Uncultivated land makes coarse wool.

The Chesil of to-day resembles in no particular the Chesil of the past, so much has it been disturbed by man and by those furious winds which disintegrate the very stones. The Isthmus of Portland two hundred years ago was a huge mound of sand, with a vertebrated spine of rock. At present this tongue of land bears a railway, terminating in a pretty cluster of houses, called Chesilton, and there is a Portland station. Railway carriages roll where seals used to crawl.

The child's danger had now assumed a different form. What he had had to fear in the descent of the cliff was

falling to the bottom of the precipice; in the isthmus, his fear was of falling into the holes. After contending with the precipice, he had now to contend with pitfalls. Everything on the sea-shore is a trap; the rock is slippery, the strand is full of quicksands. Resting-places are but snares. It is walking on ice which may suddenly crack and yawn with a fissure, through which you will disappear. The ocean has false stages below, like a well-arranged theatre.

The long backbone of granite, from which both sides of the isthmus slope, is difficult of access. It is hard to find there what, in scene-shifters' language, are termed "practicables." Man need expect no hospitality from the ocean,— from the rock no more than from the wave; the sea is kind to the bird and the fish alone. Isthmuses are especially bare and rugged; the wave, which wears and undermines them on either side, reduces them to the simplest form. Everywhere there were sharp ridges, cuttings, frightful fragments of torn stone yawning with many points like the jaws of a shark, breakneck places of wet moss, rapid slopes of rock ending in the sea. Whosoever undertakes to cross an isthmus encounters at every step huge blocks of stone as large as houses, in the shape of shin-bones, shoulder-blades, and thigh-bones, — the hideous anatomy of dismembered rocks. It is not without reason that these *striæ* of the sea-shore are called ribs. The wayfarer must escape as he best can out of the confusion of these ruins. It is like journeying over the bones of an enormous skeleton.

Imagine a child put to this Herculean task! Broad daylight might have aided him; but it was night. A guide was necessary; but he was alone. All the vigour of manhood would not have been too much; but he had only the feeble strength of a child. In default of a

guide, a footpath might have aided him; but there was none. By instinct he avoided the sharp ridge of rock, and kept as near the strand as possible. It was there that he met with the pitfalls. They were multiplied before him under three forms,— the pitfall of water, the pitfall of snow, and the pitfall of sand. This last is the most dangerous of all, because the most deceptive. To know the peril we face is alarming; to be ignorant of it is terrible. The child was fighting against unknown dangers; he was groping his way through something which might perhaps prove to be his grave. But he did not hesitate. He went round the rocks, avoided the crevices, guessed at the pitfalls, and followed the twistings and turnings caused by such obstacles; yet he went on. Though unable to advance in a straight line, he walked with a firm tread. He patiently retraced his steps if necessary; he managed to tear himself in time from the horrid bird-lime of the quicksands; he shook the snow off him; more than once he entered the water up to the knees, and directly he left it his wet knees were frozen by the intense cold of the night; he walked rapidly in his stiffened garments, yet he took care to keep his sailor's coat dry and warm on his chest. He was still tormented by hunger.

The chances of the abyss are illimitable. Everything is possible in it, even salvation; an issue may be found, though it be invisible. How the child, wrapped in a smothering winding-sheet of snow, lost on a narrow elevation between two jaws of an abyss, managed to cross the isthmus is something he could not himself have explained. He slipped, climbed, rolled, searched, walked, persevered, — that is all; that, indeed, is the secret of all triumphs. At the end of less than half an hour he felt that the ground was rising. He had reached the other shore. Leaving Chesil, he had gained *terra*

firma. The bridge which now unites Sandford Castle with Smallmouth Sands did not then exist. It is probable that in his gropings he had re-ascended as far as Wyke Regis, where there was then a tongue of sand, a natural road crossing East Fleet.

The isthmus lay behind the child now; but he found himself still face to face with the tempest, with the cold, and with the night. Before him stretched the plain, shrouded in impenetrable gloom. He examined the ground, seeking a footpath. Suddenly he bent down: he had discovered in the snow something that looked like a track. It was indeed a track, — the imprint of a foot. The print was clearly cut in the whiteness of the snow, which rendered it distinctly visible. He examined it. It was a naked foot; too small for that of a man, too large for that of a child. It was probably the foot of a woman. Beyond that mark was another, then another and another. The footprints followed one another at the distance of a step, and struck across the plain to the right. They were still fresh, and but slighty covered with snow. A woman had just passed that way. This woman was walking in the direction where the child had seen the smoke. With his eyes fixed on the footprints, he set to work to follow them.

CHAPTER II.

THE EFFECT OF SNOW.

THE child followed in this track for some time; but unfortunately the footprints became more and more indistinct, for the snow was falling thick and fast. It was at the very same time that the hooker was encountering the furious snow-storm at sea. The child, in distress like the vessel, but in a different fashion, had, in the inextricable confusion of shadows that rose up before him, no guide but the footsteps in the snow, and he held to it as the thread of the labyrinth.

Suddenly, whether the snow had filled them up entirely, or for some other reason, the footsteps ceased. All became even, level, smooth, without a stain, without an irregularity. There was now nothing but a white mantle drawn over the earth, and a black one over the sky. It seemed as if the pedestrian must have flown away. The child, in despair, bent down and searched; but in vain. As he arose he fancied that he heard some indistinct sound, but he could not be sure of it. It resembled a voice, a breath, a shadow; it was more human than animal, more sepulchral than living. It was not a sound, but rather the shadow of a sound. He looked, but saw nothing. Solitude, wide and naked, stretched before him. He listened: that which he had thought he heard had faded away. Perhaps it had been only fancy. He still listened: all

was silent. He went on his way again, walking on at random, with nothing thenceforth to guide him.

As the child moved away the noise began again. This time he could doubt no longer. It was a groan, almost a sob. He turned and peered eagerly into the darkness, but saw nothing. The sound arose once more. It was the most penetrating and piercing, yet feeble voice imaginable, for it certainly was a voice. It arose from a soul. There was a strange palpitation in the murmur; nevertheless, it seemed uttered almost unconsciously. It was an appeal from some one in suffering, and yet from some one who was scarcely conscious of that suffering or the appeal for relief. The cry — perhaps a first breath, perhaps a last sigh — was equally removed from the rattle which ends life and the wail with which it commences. It breathed a gloomy supplication from the depths of night. The child gazed intently everywhere, — far, near, on high, below. There was no one in sight. He listened. The voice arose again; he heard it distinctly. The sound somewhat resembled the bleating of a lamb. Then he was frightened, and thought for an instant of flight. The sound arose again; this was the fourth time. It was strangely miserable and plaintive; one felt that after that last effort, which was more mechanical than voluntary, the cry would probably be extinguished. It was an expiring exclamation, instinctively appealing to the amount of aid lying dormant in space. It was an agonized appeal to a possible Providence.

The child advanced in the direction from which the sound seemed to proceed. Still he saw nothing. He advanced again, watchfully. The wail continued; inarticulate and confused as it was, it had become clear, almost vibrating. The child was near the voice; but where was it? While he was hesitating between an

impulse which urged him to fly and an instinct which commanded him to remain, he perceived in the snow at his feet, a few steps before him, a sort of undulation of the dimensions of a human body, a little eminence, low, long, and narrow, like the mound over a grave, — a sepulchre in a white church-yard. At the same time the voice cried out again. It was from beneath the undulation that it proceeded. The child crouched down beside the undulation, and with both his hands began to clear it away. Beneath the snow which he removed the lines of a human form soon became visible, and suddenly in the hollow he had made a pale face appeared.

The cry had not proceeded from this face, for the eyes were shut, and the mouth, though open, was full of snow. The form remained motionless; it stirred not under the benumbed hands of the child. He shuddered when he touched it. It was a woman's form. Her dishevelled hair was mingled with the snow; she was dead.

Again the child set to work to brush away the snow. The neck of the dead woman appeared; then her shoulders, clothed in rags. Suddenly he felt something move feebly under his touch. It was something small that was buried, and that stirred. The child swiftly cleared away the snow, revealing a wretched little body — thin, and icy cold, but still alive — lying naked on the dead woman's naked breast. It was a little girl.

It had been swaddled up, but in rags so scanty that in its struggles it had freed itself from its tatters. Its attenuated limbs, which yet contained a little warmth, and its feeble breath, had somewhat melted the snow. A nurse would have said that the baby was five or six months old; but perhaps it might be a year old, for growth, in poverty, suffers deplorable drawbacks, which

sometimes even produce rachitis. When the baby's face was exposed to the air it gave a cry, the continuation of its moan of distress. For the mother not to have heard that sob proved her irrevocably dead. The child took the infant in his arms.

The stiffened body of the mother was a fearful sight. A spectral light seemed to proceed from her face. Her parted, breathless lips seemed to be forming in the mysterious language of shadows her answer to the questions put to the dead by the Invisible. The ghastly reflection of the icy plains was on her countenance. There was a youthful forehead under the brown hair, an almost indignant knitting of the eyebrows, pinched nostrils, closed eyelids, the lashes glued together by the rime, and from the corners of the eyes to the corners of the mouth extended a channel of frozen tears. The snow lighted up the corpse. Winter and death are not unlike; the corpse is a human circle. The nakedness of the dead woman's breasts was pathetic. They had fulfilled their purpose. On them was a sublime blight of the life infused into one being by another from whom life has fled, and maternal majesty was there instead of virginal purity. At the point of one of the nipples was a white pearl. It was a drop of frozen milk.

Let us explain at once. On the plain over which the deserted boy was passing a beggar woman, nursing her infant and searching for a refuge, had lost her way a few hours before. Benumbed with cold she had fallen on the snow, and was unable to rise again. The falling snow covered her. As long as she was able she had clasped her little girl to her bosom; and thus she died.

The infant had tried to suck the marble breast of the mother. Blind trust, inspired by Nature; for it seems that it is possible for a woman to suckle her child even

after her last sigh. But the lips of the infant had been unable to find the breast where the drop of milk had frozen, while under the snow the child, more accustomed to the cradle than the tomb, had wailed despairingly. The deserted child had heard the cry of the dying child. He disinterred it. He took it in his arms.

When the infant found herself in his arms she ceased crying. The faces of the two children touched each other, and the purple lips of the infant sought the cheek of the boy, as it had been a breast. The little girl had nearly reached the moment when the congealed blood stops the action of the heart. Her mother had touched her with the chill of death, for a corpse communicates death; its numbness is infectious. The infant's feet, hands, arms, knees, seemed paralyzed by cold. The boy felt the terrible chill. He had on him one garment dry and warm,—his pilot jacket. He placed the infant on the breast of the corpse, took off his jacket, wrapped the infant in it, which he took up again in his arms; and then, almost naked, under the blast of the north wind which covered him with eddies of snow-flakes, carrying the infant, he continued his journey. The little one having succeeded in again finding the boy's cheek, again applied her lips to it; and, soothed by the warmth, she fell asleep. First kiss of those two souls in the darkness!

The mother lay there on her back upon the snow, her face turned up to the night; but perhaps at the moment when the boy stripped himself to clothe the little girl, the mother saw him from the depths of infinity.

CHAPTER III.

A BURDEN MAKES A ROUGH ROAD ROUGHER.

IT was little more than four hours since the hooker sailed from the creek of Portland, leaving the boy on the shore. During the long hours since he had been deserted, and had been journeying onwards, he had met but three persons of that human society into which he was, perchance, about to enter,—a man (the man on the hill), a woman (the woman in the snow), and the little girl whom he was carrying in his arms. He was exhausted by fatigue and hunger, yet advanced more resolutely than ever, though with less strength and an added burden. He was now almost naked. The few rags which remained upon him, hardened by the frost, were sharp as glass, and cut his skin. He was colder, but the infant was warmer. That which he lost was not thrown away, but was gained by her. He found that the poor infant enjoyed the comfort, which to her was a renewal of life. He continued to advance. From time to time, still holding his burden securely, he bent down, and taking a handful of snow rubbed his feet with it, to prevent their being frost-bitten. At other times, his throat feeling as if it were on fire, he put a little snow in his mouth and sucked it; this for a moment assuaged his thirst, but later changed it into fever,—a relief which proved only an aggravation.

The storm had become appalling in its violence. Deluges of snow are possible; this was one. The tem-

pest scourged the shore at the same time that it up-tore the depths of ocean. This was, perhaps, the very moment when the distracted hooker was going to pieces in its battle with the breakers.

The boy travelled on in this cutting north wind, still towards the east, over wide surfaces of snow. He knew not how the hours passed. For a long time he had ceased to see the smoke. Such indications are soon effaced in the night; besides, it was long past the hour when fires are put out. He had, perhaps, made a mistake, and it was possible that neither town nor village existed in the direction in which he was travelling. Doubting, he yet persevered. Two or three times the little infant cried, at which times he adopted in his gait a rocking movement, and the girl was soothed and silenced; she ended by falling into a sound sleep. Shivering himself, he felt to see if she were warm, and frequently tightened the folds of the jacket round her neck, so that the frost could not get in through any opening, and so that no melted snow should drop between the garment and the child. The plain was unequal; in the declivities into which it sloped, the snow, drifted by the wind, was so deep that it almost ingulfed him, and he had to struggle through it, half buried. He walked on, however, working away the snow with his knees. Having passed the ravine, he reached the high lands swept by the winds, where the snow was thin. There he found the surface a sheet of ice. The little girl's lukewarm breath, playing on his face, warmed it for a moment, then froze in his hair, stiffening it into icicles.

The boy now felt the approach of another danger He did not dare to sit down and rest; for he knew that if he did so he would never rise again. He was overcome by fatigue, and even the weight of the snow would, as

in the case of the dead woman, have held him to the ground, while the ice would have glued him alive to the earth. He had tripped on the sides of precipices, and had recovered himself; he had stumbled into holes, and got out again,— but now the slightest fall would be death; a false step would prove fatal. He *must not slip;* yet everything was slippery; everywhere there was rime and frozen snow. The little creature whom he carried made his progress fearfully difficult; she was not only a burden which his weariness and exhaustion made excessive, but was also an encumbrance in that she occupied both his arms,— and to him who walks over ice, arms serve as a natural and necessary balancing-pole. The boy was obliged to do without this balance-pole. He did do without it and advanced, bending under his burden, not knowing what would become of him. The infant that he carried was the drop causing the cup of distress to overflow; yet he advanced, reeling at every step, and accomplishing, without spectators, miracles of equilibrium.

Without spectators? We repeat that unseen eyes perhaps watched him on this perilous path,— the eyes of the mother and the eyes of God!

The boy staggered, slipped, recovered himself, tightened his hold on the infant, and drawing the jacket closer about her covered her head with it, and staggered on again. He was, to all appearance, on the plains where Bincleaves Farm was afterwards established, between what are now called Spring Gardens and the Parsonage House. Homesteads and cottages now stand upon what was then a barren waste. Sometimes less than a century changes a steppe into a city.

Suddenly, a lull having occurred in the icy blast which was blinding him, the boy perceived, at a short distance in front of him, a cluster of roofs and of

chimneys, the reverse of a silhouette, — a city painted in white on a black horizon, something like what we call nowadays a negative proof. Roofs! dwellings! shelter! He had arrived somewhere at last; he felt the ineffable encouragement of hope. The watch of a ship which has wandered from her course feels some such emotion when he cries, "Land ho!" He quickened his pace. He would soon be among living creatures; there was no longer anything to fear. There glowed within him a sudden warmth, — security; his terrible ordeal was nearly over; thenceforward there would be neither night nor winter nor tempest. It seemed to him that he had left all such misery behind him. The infant was no longer a burden; he almost ran. His eyes were fixed on the roofs: there was life there; he never took his eyes off them. A dead man might gaze thus on what was visible through the half-open cover of his sepulchre. There were the chimneys of which he had seen the smoke; no smoke arose from them now.

It was not long before the boy reached the houses. He came to the outskirts of a town, — an open street. At that period the barring of streets at night had been nearly abandoned. The street began by two houses. In those two houses neither candle nor lamp was visible; nor in the whole street, nor in the whole town, as far as eye could reach. The house to the right was a roof rather than a house; nothing could be more squalid. The walls were of mud, the roof was of straw, and there was more thatch than wall. An immense nettle, springing from the bottom of the wall, reached up to the roof. The hovel had but one door, which was like that of a dog-kennel, and a window which was but a hole. Both were shut up; but at the side an inhabited pig-sty told that the house also was inhabited. The house on the left was large, high, and built entirely

of stone, with a slated roof. That too was closed; it was the rich man's home, opposite that of the pauper.

The boy did not hesitate; he approached the great mansion. The double door of massive oak, studded with large nails, was of the kind that leads one to expect that behind it there is an armory of bolts and locks. An iron knocker was attached to it. He raised the knocker with some difficulty, for his benumbed hands were stumps rather than hands, and knocked once. No answer. He knocked again, — twice this time; no movement was heard in the house. He knocked a third time; still there was no sound. He saw that they were all asleep, or did not mean to get up. Then he turned to the hovel. He picked a small stone out of the snow, and knocked with it against the low door; there was no answer He raised himself on tiptoe, and knocked with his stone against the pane, — too softly to break the glass, but loud enough to be heard; no voice was heard, no step moved, no candle was lighted. He saw that there, as well, they did not care to awake. The house of stone and the thatched hovel were equally deaf to the appeal of the wretched.

The boy decided to push on farther, and make his way down the street in front of him, — a street so dark that it seemed more like a gulf between two cliffs than the entrance to a town.

CHAPTER IV.

ANOTHER KIND OF DESERT.

IT was Weymouth which the boy had just entered. Weymouth then was not the respectable and fine Weymouth of to-day.

Ancient Weymouth could not boast, like the present one, of an irreproachable rectangular quay, with an inn and a statue in honour of George III.,— and this owing to the fact that George III. had not then been born. For the same reason, they had not yet fashioned on the side of the green hill to the east, by cutting away the turf and leaving the chalky soil exposed to the view, the "White Horse," an acre long, bearing the king upon his back,— still another work of art in honour of George III. These honours, however, were deserved. George III., having lost in his old age the mind he had never possessed in his youth, was not responsible for the calamities of his reign. He was little better than an idiot. So why not erect statues to him?

Weymouth, a hundred and eighty years ago, was about as symmetrical as a game of spillikins in confusion. In legends it is said that Astaroth travelled about the world, carrying on her back a wallet which contained everything, even good women in their houses. A goodly number of sheds thrown pell-mell from her bag would give an idea of quaint old Weymouth,— the good women in the sheds included. The Music Hall remains as a specimen of the buildings of that day.

The whole town was composed of shapeless, overhanging buildings,— some with pillars, leaning one against the other for support against the sea-wind, and leaving between them narrow and winding lanes and passages, often flooded by the equinoctial tides. A heap of grandmother houses crowded round a grandfather church, such was Weymouth; a sort of old Norman village washed ashore on the coast of England. The traveller who entered the tavern, now replaced by the hotel, instead of paying his twenty-five francs for a fried sole and a bottle of wine, had to suffer the humiliation of eating a pennyworth of soup made of fish,— which soup, by-the-bye, was very good. Wretched fare!

The deserted child, carrying the foundling, passed through the first street, then the second, then the third. He raised his eyes, seeking in the upper stories and in the roofs a lighted window-pane; but all were closed and dark. At intervals he knocked at the doors. No one answered. Nothing so hardens the heart as for its owner to be snug and warm in bed. The noise and the shaking had at last awakened the infant. The boy knew this because he felt her suck his cheek. She did not cry, believing him her mother. He was about to turn and wander through the Scrambridge lanes, where there were then more cultivated plots than dwellings, more thorn-hedges than houses; but fortunately he struck into a passage which exists to this day near the Trinity schools. This passage led him to the water's edge, where there was a roughly built quay with a parapet, and on the right he made out a bridge. It was the bridge over the Wey, connecting Weymouth with Melcombe Regis, and under the arches of which the Backwater communicates with the harbour.

Weymouth, a hamlet, was then a suburb of Melcombe Regis, a city and port; now Melcombe Regis is a parish

of Weymouth. The village has absorbed the city. It was the bridge which did the work. Bridges are strange instruments of suction, which absorb a population, and often swell one river-bank at the expense of its opposite neighbour.

The boy went to the bridge, which at that period was a covered wooden structure. He crossed it. Thanks to its roofing, there was no snow on the planks; his bare feet had a moment's comfort as they crossed them. Having passed over the bridge, he was in Melcombe Regis. There were fewer wooden houses than stone ones there. He was no longer in the village, he was in the city. The bridge opened on a rather fine street called St. Thomas's Street; he entered it. Here and there were high carved gables and shop-fronts. He set to knocking at the doors again: he had no strength left to call or shout.

At Melcombe Regis, as at Weymouth, no one was stirring. The doors were all carefully locked and barred; the windows were covered with shutters. Every precaution had been taken to avoid being aroused by disagreeable surprises. The little wanderer was suffering the indefinable depression caused by a sleeping town. Sleep has gloomy associates beyond this life: the decomposed thoughts of the sleepers float above them in a mist and combine with the possible, which perhaps has also the power of thought, as it floats in space. Hence comes bewilderment. Dreams, which may be compared to clouds, interpose their folds and their transparencies over that star, the mind. Above those closed eyelids, where vision has taken the place of sight, a sepulchral disintegration of outlines and appearances dilates itself into impalpability. Mysterious and diffused existences amalgamate themselves with life in sleep, that counterpart of death. Even he who sleeps not, feels a medium full of sinister

life press upon him. The surrounding chimera, in which he suspects a reality, impedes him. The waking man, wending his way amidst the sleep-phantoms of others, has, or imagines that he has, a vague fear of contact with the invisible, and feels at every moment the obscure pressure of a hostile encounter which immediately dissolves. A sleeping town has something of the effect of a forest.

This is what is called being afraid without cause. Very naturally, a child is even more susceptible to this feeling than a man. The uneasiness of nocturnal fear, increased by the spectral houses, increased the weight of the burden under which the boy was struggling. He entered Conycar Lane, and perceived at the end of that passage the Backwater, which he mistook for the ocean; he no longer knew in what direction the sea lay. He retraced his steps, struck to the left by Maiden Street, and returned as far as St. Alban's Row. There he knocked violently at any house that he happened to pass. His blows, on which he was expending his last energies, were faint and irregular,— now ceasing for a time, now renewed as if in irritation. One voice answered,— that of Time. Three o'clock tolled slowly behind him from the old belfry of St. Nicholas. Then silence reigned again.

That no inhabitant should have opened his lattice may appear surprising. But we must remember that in January, 1790, they were just over a severe outbreak of the plague in London, and that the fear of receiving sick vagabonds caused a diminution of hospitality everywhere. People would not even open their windows for fear of inhaling the poison.

The boy felt the coldness of men more deeply than the coldness of the night. The coldness of men is intentional. He felt a sinking of heart which he had not

experienced on the plain. Now he had entered into the midst of life, and yet remained alone. This was the height of misery. He had understood the pitiless desert, but the unrelenting town was too much to bear. The hour, the strokes of which he had just counted, had been another blow. It seemed to be a declaration of indifference, and as if Eternity were saying, "What does it matter to me?" He stopped, and it is probable that in that miserable minute he asked himself whether it would not be better to lie down there and die; but the little girl leaned her head against his shoulder, and fell asleep again. This blind confidence drove him on once more. He whom all supports were failing felt that he was himself a basis of support. Irresistible summons of duty! Neither such ideas nor such a situation belonged to his age. It is probable that he did not well understand them; it was merely a matter of instinct. He set out in the direction of Johnstone Row. But now he no longer walked; he dragged himself along. He left St. Mary's Street to the left, made zig-zags through lanes, and at the end of a winding passage found himself in a rather wide, open space. It was a piece of unimproved land,— probably the spot where Chesterfield Place now stands. The houses ended there. He perceived the sea on his right, and scarcely anything more of the town on his left.

What *would* become of him? Here was the country again! To the east great inclined planes of snow indicated the wide slopes of Radipole. Should he continue his journey; should he advance and re-enter the solitude, or should he turn back and re-enter the town. How was he to choose between the mute plain and the deaf city? The poor little despairing wanderer cast a piteous glance around him.

Suddenly he heard an ominous sound.

CHAPTER V.

MISANTHROPY PLAYS ITS PRANKS.

A STRANGE and alarming grinding of teeth reached the boy through the darkness. It was enough to drive one back; but he advanced. To those to whom silence has become dreadful, even a howl is comforting. That fierce growl reassured him; that threat was a promise. There must be some creature alive and awake there, though it might be a wild beast. He advanced in the direction whence the snarl had come.

The boy turned the corner of a wall, and, behind it, in the sepulchral light made by the reflection of snow and sea, he saw a thing placed as if for shelter. It was a cart; that is, unless it was a hovel. It had wheels, so it was a carriage; it had a roof, so it was a dwelling. From the roof arose a funnel, and out of the funnel came smoke. This smoke was red, and seemed to imply a good fire in the interior. Behind, projecting hinges indicated a door; and in the centre of this door a square opening revealed a light inside the van.

The boy approached. The creature that had growled evidently perceived his approach, and became furious. It was no longer a growl which he had to encounter, it was a roar. He heard a sharp sound, as of a chain violently pulled to its full length; and suddenly under the door, between the hind wheels, two rows of sharp white teeth appeared. At the same instant a head was put through the window.

Be quiet there!" said the head.

The mouth was silent. The head began again: —

"Is anybody there?"

"Yes," the child answered.

"Who is it?"

"Me."

"You? Who are you? Where did you come from?"

"I am tired," said the child.

"What time is it?"

"I am cold."

"What are you doing here?"

"I am hungry."

"Every one cannot be as happy as a lord," the head replied. "Go away."

The head was withdrawn and the window closed.

The boy folded the sleeping infant closer in his arms, and summoned up all his strength to resume his journey; he had already taken a few steps, and was hurrying away. But as the window of the wagon closed, the door opened; a step was let down, and the voice which had spoken to the boy cried out angrily from the interior of the van, —

"Well! why don't you come in?"

The boy turned back.

"Come in," resumed the voice. "Who ever heard of a fellow like this, — a fellow who is hungry and cold, and yet who does not come in?"

The boy, at once repulsed and invited, stood motionless.

"You are told to come in, you young rascal," the voice continued.

The boy made up his mind, and placed one foot on the lowest step. There was a loud growl from under the van. The boy drew back; the gaping jaws had reappeared.

"Be quiet!" cried the voice of the man.

The jaws retreated, the growling ceased.

"Come up!" continued the man.

The boy with some difficulty climbed up the three steps, his movements being impeded by the infant that was so completely enveloped in the jacket that nothing could be distinguished of her, and she was little more than a shapeless bundle. He ascended the three steps; and having reached the threshold, stopped. There was no light in the van except that which proceeded from the opening at the top of the stove, in which sparkled a peat fire. On the stove stood a porringer and a saucepan, apparently containing something to eat, for a savory odour was perceptible. The inside was furnished with a chest, a stool, and an unlighted lantern which hung from the ceiling. There were also a number of hooks on the walls, from which all sorts of things hung; and there were shelves upon which stood rows of glasses and bottles, a granulator, an alembic, and other chemical instruments, as well as cooking utensils. The van was oblong in shape, the stove being in front. It was not even a little room into which the boy entered,—it was only a big box. There was more light outside from the snow than inside from the stove. Everything in the van was indistinct and misty; nevertheless, the reflection of the fire on the ceiling enabled the spectator to read in large letters,—

URSUS, PHILOSOPHER.

The boy, in fact was entering the abode of Homo and Ursus. It was the former that he had just heard growling. Having reached the threshold, he perceived near the stove a tall, smooth-faced, thin old man dressed in grey, whose head, as he stood erect, touched the roof.

The man could not have raised himself on tiptoe. The van was just his height.

"Come in!" said the man, who was Ursus. The boy entered.

"Put down your bundle."

The boy placed his burden carefully on the top of the chest, for fear of awakening and terrifying his charge.

The man continued: "How gently you put it down! You could not be more careful if it were a case of relics. Are you afraid of tearing a hole in your rags? What are you doing in the streets at this hour, you vagabond? Who are you? Answer! But, no; I forbid you to answer. You are cold; warm yourself as quick as you can," and he shoved him by the shoulders in front of the fire.

"How wet you are! You're frozen through! A nice state you are in to enter a man's house! Take off those rags, you villain!" and as he hastily tore off the boy's rags with one hand, with the other he took down from a nail a man's shirt, and one of those knitted jackets which are up to this day called kiss-me-quicks. "Here are some clothes," he added gruffly. He picked up a woollen rag, and chafed before the fire the limbs of the exhausted and bewildered child, who at that moment felt as if he were seeing and touching heaven. The limbs having been rubbed, the man next wiped the boy's feet.

"You 're all right!" he exclaimed. "I was fool enough to fancy you had frozen your hind-legs or fore-paws. You will not lose the use of them this time. Dress yourself!"

The boy put on the shirt, and the man slipped the knitted jacket over it.

"Now —" The man pushed the stool forward and made the boy sit down; then he pointed with his finger

to the porringer which was smoking upon the stove. What the child saw in the porringer was again heaven to him,— namely, a potato and a bit of bacon.

"You are hungry — eat!" said the man; and he took from the shelf a crust of bread and an iron fork, and handed them to the child.

The boy hesitated.

"Perhaps you expect me to lay the cloth," said the man, as he placed the porringer on the child's lap. "Gobble that up! he exclaimed imperiously.

Hunger overcame astonishment. The boy began to eat. He devoured rather than ate the food.

"Not so fast, you horrid glutton!" grumbled the man. "Is n't he a greedy scoundrel? When such scum are hungry, they eat in a revolting fashion. You should see a lord sup. In my time, I have seen dukes eat; they don't eat like the common herd. They drink, however. Come, you pig! stuff yourself!"

The deafness which is the concomitant of a hungry stomach caused the child to take little heed of these violent epithets, tempered as they were by such beneficent charity of action. For the moment he was absorbed by two ecstasies,— food and warmth.

Ursus continued his imprecations, muttering to himself: "I have seen King James supping *in propriâ personâ,* in the Banqueting House, adorned with the paintings of the famous Rubens. His Majesty touched nothing. This beggar here gorges himself. What put it into my head to come to this Weymouth, seven times devoted to the infernal deities? I have sold nothing since morning; I have harangued the snow; I have played the flute to the hurricane; I have not pocketed a farthing; and now, to-night, beggars drop in. Horrid place! There is battle, struggle, competition between the fools in the street and myself. They try to give

me nothing but farthings. I try to give them nothing but drugs. Well! to-day I 've made nothing,— not an idiot on the highway; not a penny in the till. Eat away, hell-born boy! tear and crunch! We have fallen on times when nothing can equal the cynicism of spongers. Fatten at my expense, parasite! This wretched boy is more than hungry; his is not appetite, it is ferocity. Perhaps he has the plague. Have you the plague, you thief? Suppose he were to give it to Homo! No, never! Let the populace die, but not my wolf. By-the-bye, I am hungry myself. I declare, all this is very disagreeable. I have worked far into the night. There are times in a man's life when he is hard pressed; I was to-night, by hunger. I was alone. I made a fire. I had but one potato, one crust of bread, a mouthful of bacon, and a drop of milk, and I put it to warm. I said to myself, 'How good it smells!' I fancy I am going to eat, when lo and behold! this crocodile drops in at the very moment; he installs himself between my food and myself. See how my larder is devastated! Eat, pike! eat, you shark! How many teeth have you in your jaws? Guzzle, wolf-cub!— no, I withdraw that word; I respect wolves. Swallow up my food, you boa! I have worked all day, and far into the night, on an empty stomach; my throat is sore; my pancreas is in distress; my entrails are torn; and my reward is to see another eat! 'T is all one, though. We will divide. He shall have the bread, the potato, and the bacon, but I will have the milk."

Just then a wail, touching and prolonged, arose in the hut. The man listened. "You cry, sycophant! Why do you cry?"

The boy turned towards him; it was evident that it was not he who had cried. He had his mouth full. Yet the cry continued. The man went to the chest.

"So it is your bundle that wails! Vale of Jehoshaphat! Who ever heard of a screeching parcel! What the devil has your bundle got to croak about?"

He unrolled the jacket; an infant's head appeared, the mouth open and crying.

"Well! Who goes there?" said the man. "Here is another of them. When is this to end? Who is this! To arms! Corporal, call out the guard! Here is another intruder in the camp! What have you brought me, thief? Don't you see it is thirsty? The little one must have a drink. So, now, I shall not even have the milk!"

He took down from the things lying in disorder on the shelf a roll of linen, a sponge, and a phial, muttering savagely, "What an infernal scrape this is!" Then he looked at the infant. "'T is a girl! one can tell that by her scream; and she too is drenched to the skin!"

He dragged off as he had done from the boy the tatters in which the infant was tied up rather than dressed, and swathed her in a rag, which though of coarse linen was clean and dry. This rough and hurried toilet made the infant angry. "How atrociously she screeches!" he exclaimed.

He bit off a long narrow piece of sponge, tore from the roll a square piece of linen, took the saucepan containing the milk from the stove, filled the bottle with milk, pushed the sponge half-way down into its neck, covering the protruding end with linen, tied it with a bit of thread, applied his cheeks to the phial to be sure that it was not too hot, and then seizing under his left arm the bewildered infant which was still crying, said:

"Come! take your supper, creature! Let me suckle you," at the same time putting the neck of the bottle to its mouth.

The little infant drank greedily. He held the phial at the necessary incline, grumbling,—

"They are all the same, the cowards! While they get all they want they are quiet!"

The child drank so ravenously, and seized so eagerly this breast offered by a cross-grained Providence, that she was taken with a violent fit of coughing.

"You are going to choke!" growled Ursus. "A fine gobbler this one is too!"

He drew away the sponge which she was sucking, allowed the cough to subside, and then replaced the phial to her lips, saying, "Suck! you little wretch!"

In the mean time the boy had laid down his fork. Seeing the infant drink made him forget to eat. The moment before, while he ate, the expression on his face was satisfaction; now it was gratitude. He watched the infant's renewal of life; and the completion of the restoration begun by himself filled his eyes with an ineffable brilliancy. Ursus went on muttering angry words between his teeth. The boy now and then lifted to him eyes moist with the deep emotion which the poor little being felt, but was unable to express.

"Eat, eat, I tell you!" Ursus said to the boy, savagely.

"And you?" said the boy, trembling all over, and with tears in his eyes,—"you will have nothing!"

"Will you be kind enough to eat it all up, you cub? As there was not enough for me, there cannot be too much for you."

The boy took up his fork, but did not eat.

"Eat!" shouted Ursus. "What have you to do with me? Who speaks of me? Wretched little barefooted clerk of Poverty Parish! eat it all up, I tell you! You are here to eat, drink, and sleep; eat, or I will kick you out, both of you."

The boy, at this threat, began to eat again. He had not much trouble in finishing what was left in the porringer.

Ursus muttered to himself now: "This building is badly constructed. The cold comes in through that window-pane."

A pane had indeed been broken in front, either by a jolt of the van or by a stone thrown by some mischievous boy. Ursus had placed a piece of paper over the fracture, but it had become unpasted, letting in the wind again. He was seated on the chest; the infant, cradled in his arms, was sucking rapturously at the bottle, in the blissful somnolency of cherubim before their Creator and infants at their mothers' breast.

"She is surfeited!" said Ursus; and he added: "After this, preach sermons on temperance!"

The wind tore from the pane the plaster of paper, and blew it across the van; but this mattered little to the children who were entering life anew. While the little girl drank, and the little boy ate, Ursus grumbled to himself: —

"Intemperance begins in the infant in swaddling clothes. What useless trouble Bishop Tillotson gives himself, thundering against excessive drinking! — What an odious draught of wind! and then my stove is old, and allows enough smoke to escape to give you trichiasis. Fire has its inconveniences as well as cold; one cannot see clearly. — That creature over there abuses my hospitality. Well, I have not been able to distinguish the animal's face yet. — Comfort is wanting here. By Jove! I am a great admirer of exquisite banquets in well closed rooms! I have missed my vocation; I was born to be a sensualist. The greatest of sages was Philoxenus, who wished to possess the neck of a crane, in order to enjoy the pleasures of the table longer. — Receipts to-day, naught; nothing sold all day. Inhabitants, servants, and tradesmen, here is the doctor, here are the drugs! You are losing your time, old friend; pack up

your physic,— every one is well, down here. Accursed town, where everybody is well! The skies alone have diarrhœa! How it snows! Anaxagoras taught that the snow was black; and he was right, cold being blackness: ice is night. What a hurricane! I can fancy the delight of those at sea. A hurricane is like the passage of demons; it is the row the tempest-fiends make in galloping and rolling head-over-heels over our bone-boxes. In the cloud this one has a tail, that one has horns, another a flame for a tongue, another claws to its wings, another a lord chancellor's paunch, another an academician's pate: each new gust is a fresh demon. Zounds! there are folks at sea, that is certain. My friends, get through the storm as best you can; I have enough to do to get through life. — Come now, do I keep an inn, or do I not? Why should I harbour these travellers? The universal distress sends its spatterings even as far as my poverty; into my cabin fall hideous drops of the far-spreading scum of mankind. I am the victim of the voracity of travellers; I am a prey,— the prey of those dying of hunger. Winter, night, a pasteboard hut, an unfortunate friend below and without, the storm, a potato, a fire as big as my fist, the wind penetrating through every cranny, not a half-penny, — and bundles are brought to me which set to howling! I open them, and find beggars inside! Is this fair? Besides, the laws are violated. See, a vagabond with a vagabond child! Mischievous pick-pocket, evil-minded abortion! so you walk the streets after curfew? If our good king only knew it, would he not have you thrown into the bottom of a ditch, just to teach you better? My lord walks out at night with my lady, with the thermometer at fifteen degrees below the freezing-point, bare-headed and bare-footed. You should understand that such things are forbidden. There are rules and regulations,

you lawless wretches! Vagabonds are punished; honest folks who have houses are guarded and protected. Kings are the fathers of their people. I have my own house. You would have been whipped in the public street had you chanced to have been met; and quite right, too. Order must be maintained in a city. For my own part, I did wrong not to denounce you to the constable. But I am such a fool! I understand what is right and do what is wrong. Oh, the ruffian! to come here in such a state! I did not see the snow upon them when they came in; it has melted, and here's my whole house swamped. I have an inundation in my home. I shall have to burn an incredible amount of coals to dry up this lake,— and coals at twelve farthings, the miners' standard! How am I going to manage to fit three into this van? My career is ended; there is nothing left for me now but to become a wet-nurse. I am going to have on my hands the weaning of the future beggardom of England. It seems destined to be my employment, office, and function to bring up the offspring of that colossal Prostitute, Misery; to bring to perfection future gallows' birds, and teach young thieves the forms of philosophy. The tongue of the wolf is the warning of God! And to think that if I had not been eaten up by creatures of this kind for the last thirty years, I should be rich, and Homo would be fat; I should have a medicine-chest full of rarities, as many surgical instruments as Doctor Linacre surgeon to King Henry VIII., divers animals of all kinds, Egyptian mummies and similar curiosities; I should be a member of the College of Physicians, and have the right of using the library built in 1652 by the celebrated Hervey, and of studying in the lantern of that dome whence you can see the whole of London; I could continue my observations of solar obfuscation, and prove that a caliginous vapour arises from the planet.— Such

was the opinion of John Kepler, who was born the year before the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, and who was mathematician to the emperor. — The sun is a chimney which sometimes smokes; so does my stove; hence my stove is as good as the sun. Yes, I should have made my fortune; my career would have been a very different one. I should not be the insignificant fellow I am. I should not degrade science in the highways; for the crowd is not worthy of the doctrine, the crowd being nothing better than a confused mixture of all ages, sexes, humours, and conditions that wise men of all periods have not hesitated to despise, and whose absurdities and passions are detested even by the most charitable. Oh, I am weary of existence! After all, one does not live long; this human life is soon over. But no, — it is long. At intervals, in order that we may not become too discouraged, and that we may have the stupidity to consent to endure existence, and not profit by the magnificent opportunities to hang ourselves which ropes and nails afford, Nature pretends to take a little care of man — not to-night, though! The rogue causes the wheat to spring up, ripens the grape, gives song to the nightingale. From time to time we get a ray of sunshine or a glass of gin, — and that is what we call happiness! It is a narrow border of good round a huge winding-sheet of evil. We have a destiny of which the devil has woven the stuff, and God has sewn the hem. In the mean time, you have eaten all my supper up, you thief!"

The infant, whom he was holding tenderly in his arms all the while he was vituperating it, shut its eyes languidly, — a sign of repletion.

Ursus examined the phial, and grumbled: "She has drunk it all up, the impudent creature!"

He arose, and holding the infant in his left arm,

with his right he raised the lid of the chest and drew out a bear-skin, — the one he called his real skin, as the reader may remember. While he was doing this he heard the other child eating, and glanced at him sideways.

"I shall have my hands full if I have to feed that growing glutton," he muttered. "It will be a worm gnawing at the vitals of my industry."

He spread out, still with one arm, the bear-skin on the chest, working his elbow and managing his movements so as not to disturb the sleep into which the infant was just sinking. Then he laid her down on the fur, on the side of the chest next the fire. Having done so, he placed the phial on the stove, and exclaimed, "I 'm confoundedly thirsty myself!"

He looked into the pot. There were a few mouthfuls of milk left in it; he raised it to his lips. As he was about to drink, his eye fell on the little girl. He replaced the pot on the stove, took the phial, uncorked it, poured into it all the milk that remained, which was just sufficient to fill it, replaced the sponge and the linen rag over it, and tied it round the neck of the bottle.

"I 'm hungry and thirsty all the same," he observed. Then he added: "When one cannot get bread, one must drink water."

Behind the stove there was a jug with the spout broken off. He took it and handed it to the boy. "Do you want a drink?"

The boy drank, and then went on eating. Ursus seized the pitcher again, and raised it to his mouth. The temperature of the water which it contained had been greatly modified by the proximity of the stove. He swallowed a mouthful and made a grimace. Then he said: —

"Water! pretending to be pure, thou resemblest false friends. Thou art warm at the top and cold at the bottom."

In the mean time the boy had finished his supper. The porringer was more than empty; it was cleaned out. He picked up and ate pensively a few crumbs caught in the folds of the knitted jacket on his lap.

Ursus turned towards him. "Now, a word with you. The mouth is not made only for eating; it is made for speaking. Now that you are warmed and stuffed, you beast, give an account of yourself. You are going to answer my questions. Where did you come from?"

"I do not know," the boy replied.

"Why do you say you don't know?"

"I was abandoned this evening on the sea-shore."

"You little scamp! what's your name? He is so good for nothing that even his relatives desert him."

"I have no relatives."

"Have a care! I don't like people who sing a tune of fibs. You must have relatives, since you have a sister."

"She is not my sister."

"She is not your sister?"

"No."

"Who is she then?"

"It is a baby that I found."

"Found?"

"Yes."

"What! did you pick her up?"

"Yes."

"Where? If you lie I'll thrash you within an inch of your life!"

"I found her on the breast of a woman who was lying dead in the snow"

"When?"

"About an hour ago."

"Where?"

"A league from here."

The arched brows of Ursus contracted and assumed that pointed shape which characterizes emotion on the brow of a philosopher. "Dead! Lucky for her! We had better leave her in the snow. She is better off there. In which direction?"

"In the direction of the sea."

"Did you cross the bridge?"

"Yes."

Ursus opened the window at the back of the van and looked out. The weather had not improved. The snow was falling thick and fast. He shut the window. Then he filled the broken pane with a rag, heaped the stove with peat, spread out as far as he could the bear-skin on the chest, took a large book which he had in a corner, placed it under the skin for a pillow, and laid the head of the sleeping infant on it. Then he turned to the boy.

"Lie down here," he said.

The boy obeyed, and stretched himself at full length by the side of the infant. Ursus rolled the bear-skin over the two children, and tucked it under their feet. He took down from a shelf, and tied round his waist, a linen belt with a large pocket containing, no doubt, a case of instruments and bottles of restoratives. Then he took the lantern from where it hung on the ceiling, and lighted it. It was a dark-lantern. When lighted, it still left the children in shadow.

Ursus half opened the door, and said: "I am going out; do not be afraid. I shall return. Go to sleep."

Then letting down the steps, he called Homo. He was answered by a loving growl. Ursus, holding the lantern in his hand, descended. The steps were re-

placed, the door was reclosed. The children were left alone.

From without, a voice, the voice of Ursus, said: "Say, you, boy, who have just eaten up my supper, are you already asleep?"

"No," replied the child.

"Well, if she cries, give her the rest of the milk."

The clanking of a chain was heard, and the sound of a man's footsteps, mingled with the soft patter of an animal's paws, died away in the distance. A few minutes after, both children were sound asleep. Such dreams as are prone to visit beings of that age floated from one to the other; beneath their closed eyelids there shone, perhaps, the light of the spheres. If the word "marriage" were not inappropriate to the situation, they were husband and wife after the fashion of the angels. Such innocence in such darkness, such purity in such an embrace, such foretastes of heaven, are possible only to childhood, and no immensity approaches the greatness of little children. The fearful perpetuity of the dead chained beyond life, the mighty animosity of the ocean to a wreck, the whiteness of the snow over buried bodies, do not equal in pathos two children's mouths meeting divinely in sleep,— a meeting which is not even a kiss: a betrothal perchance; perchance a catastrophe. The unknown overhangs this juxtaposition. It charms, it terrifies, — who knows which? It stays the pulse. Innocence is greater than virtue; innocence is holy ignorance. They slept; they were at peace; they were warm. The nakedness of their interlaced bodies imaged the virginity of their souls. They lay there, as it were, on the bosom of the infinite Father of all.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AWAKING.

A SAD, pale light penetrated the van. It was the frozen dawn. That wan light which throws into relief the mournful reality of objects that are blurred into spectral forms by the night did not waken the children, so soundly were they sleeping. The van was warm. Their breathings alternated like two peaceful waves. There was no longer any hurricane without. The light of dawn was slowly taking possession of the horizon; the constellations were being extinguished, like candles blown out one after the other,— only a few large stars resisted. The deep-toned song of the Infinite was coming from the sea. The fire in the stove was not quite out. The twilight changed gradually into daylight.

The boy slept less heavily than the girl. At length, a ray brighter than the others broke through the pane, and he opened his eyes. The sleep of childhood ends in forgetfulness. He lay in a state of semi-stupor, without knowing where he was or what was around him, and without making any effort to remember, gazing at the ceiling, and setting himself an aimless task as he dreamily surveyed the letters of the inscription, "Ursus, Philosopher," which, as he did not know how to read, he examined without the power of deciphering. The sound of a key grating in the lock of the door caused him to turn his head. The door turned

on its hinges, the steps were let down. Ursus was returning. He ascended the steps, his extinguished lantern in his hand. At the same time the patter of four paws was heard on the steps. It was Homo, following Ursus, who had also returned to his home.

The frightened boy gave a sudden start as the wolf opened his mouth, disclosing two rows of glistening white teeth. The animal stopped when he had got half way up the steps, and placed both fore-paws inside the van, leaning on the threshold, like a preacher with his elbows on the edge of the pulpit. He sniffed at the chest from afar, not being in the habit of finding it occupied as it then was. At last he made up his mind to enter. The boy, seeing the wolf in the van, jumped out of the bear-skin, and placed himself in front of the infant, who was sleeping as soundly as ever.

Ursus had just hung the lantern up on the nail in the ceiling. Silently, and with mechanical deliberation, he unbuckled the belt which held his case, and replaced it on the shelf. He looked at nothing, and seemed to see nothing. His eyes were glassy. Something had evidently moved him deeply. His thoughts at length found vent, as usual, in a rapid flow of words.

"Better off, doubtless! Dead! stone dead!" he soliloquized.

He bent down, and put a shovelful of turf-mould into the stove; and as he poked the peat, he growled out:

"I had great trouble in finding her. She was buried under two feet of snow. Had it not been for Homo, who sees as clearly with his nose as Christopher Columbus did with his mind, I should still be there, digging at the avalanche, and playing hide-and-seek with Death. Diogenes took his lantern and sought for a man; I took my lantern and sought for a woman. He found a sarcasm; I found mourning. How cold she

was! I touched her hand, — it was like stone! What silence in her eyes! How can any one be such a fool as to die and leave a child behind! It will not be convenient to pack three into this box. A pretty family I have now! A boy and a girl!"

While Ursus was speaking, Homo sidled up close to the stove. The hand of the sleeping infant was hanging down between the stove and the chest. The wolf set to licking it. He licked it so softly that he did not wake the little infant.

Ursus turned round. "Well done, Homo! I shall be father, and you shall be uncle."

Then he betook himself again to mending the fire with philosophical care, without pausing in his soliloquy, however.

"Adoption! It is settled; Homo is willing." He drew himself up. "I should like to know who is responsible for that woman's death? Is it man? or — " He raised his eyes, but looked beyond the ceiling, and his lips murmured, "Is it Thou?"

Then his head dropped, as if beneath a burden. Raising his eyes a moment afterwards they met those of the just-awakened boy, who was listening.

"What are you laughing at?" Ursus demanded abruptly.

"I am not laughing," replied the boy.

Ursus looked at him intently for a few minutes. "Then you are frightful to look upon!" he exclaimed.

The interior of the van, on the previous night, had been so dark that Ursus had not seen the boy's face at all. The broad daylight revealed it. He placed the palms of his hands on the two shoulders of the boy, and, examining his countenance more and more piercingly, exclaimed, —

"Do not laugh any more!"

"I am not laughing," said the child.

Ursus shuddered from head to foot. "You *are* laughing, I say!" Then seizing the boy with a grasp which would have been one of fury had it not been one of pity, he asked him, roughly: "Who did that to you?"

"I don't know what you mean," the boy replied.

"How long have you had that laugh?"

"I have always been thus," said the child.

Ursus turned away, saying in a low voice, "I thought that work was out of date now."

He took from under the head of the infant, very softly, so as not to awaken her, the book which he had placed there for a pillow. "Let us see Conquest," he murmured!

He turned the pages with his thumb, stopped at a certain one, and read: "'De Denasatis,' it is here." And he continued: "'Bucca fissa usque ad aures, gengivis denudatis, nasoque murdridato, masca eris, et ridebis semper.' There it is for certain."

Then he replaced the book on one of the shelves, growling, "It might not be advisable to inquire too deeply into a case of the kind. We will remain on the surface; laugh on, my boy!"

Just then the little girl awoke. Her good-day was a cry.

"Come, nurse, give her the breast," said Ursus.

The infant sat up. Ursus taking the bottle from the stove, gave it to her to suck. Then the sun rose above the horizon. Its brilliant rays shone through the window straight into the face of the infant, which was turned towards it. Her eyeballs, fixed on the sun, reflected its light like two mirrors. The eyeballs were immovable, the eyelids also.

"Look!" exclaimed Ursus; "she is blind!"

PART II.

BY ORDER OF THE KING.

BOOK I.

THE EVERLASTING PRESENCE OF THE PAST-MAN REFLECTS MAN.

CHAPTER I.

LORD CLANCHARLIE.

I.

THERE was, in those days, an old tradition. That tradition was Lord Linnæus Clancharlie. Linnæus Baron Clancharlie, a contemporary of Cromwell, was one of the few peers of England who accepted the republic. The reason of his acceptance of it might, for want of a better, be found in the fact that for the time being the republic was triumphant. It was a matter of course that Lord Clancharlie should adhere to the republic as long as the republic was in power; but after the close of the revolution and the fall of the parliamentary government, Lord Clancharlie had persisted in his fidelity to it. It would have been easy for the noble patrician to re-enter the reconstituted upper house, — the repentant being ever gladly welcomed at restorations, and Charles II. being a kind prince enough to those who returned to their allegiance to him; but Lord Clancharlie had quite

failed to understand what one owes to circumstances. While the nation was overwhelming with acclamations the king who had come to resume possession of England; while a united parliament was recording its verdict; while the people were rapturously saluting the monarchy; while the dynasty was rising anew amidst a glorious and triumphant recantation, — at the moment when the past was becoming the future, and the future was becoming the past, that nobleman remained obdurate. He turned his head resolutely away from all these temptations and voluntarily exiled himself. Though he might have been a peer, he preferred being an outlaw. Years had passed, and he had grown old in his fidelity to the dead republic, and was therefore loaded with the ridicule which is the natural reward of such folly.

Lord Clancharlie had retired to Switzerland, where he inhabited a sort of lofty ruin on the banks of Lake Geneva. He had chosen his abode in the most rugged nook of the lake, between Chillon, Bonnivard's dungeon, and Vevay, Ludlow's burial-place. The rugged Alps, filled with winds and clouds, were around him: and he lived there, hidden in the wide shadows cast by the mountains. He was rarely seen by any one. The man was out of his country, almost out of his century. At that time no resistance to the established power was considered justifiable. England was happy. A restoration is like the reconciliation of husband and wife; prince and nation return to each other, — no state of things can be more gracious or more pleasant. Great Britain beamed with joy; to have a king at all was a great deal; but it was a great deal more to have such a charming one. Charles II. was an amiable man, fond of pleasure, yet able to govern; a great man, too, — at least in the opinion of Louis XIV. He was essentially a gentleman. Charles II. was greatly admired by his sub-

jects. He made war upon Hanover for reasons best known to himself; at least, no one else knew them. He sold Dunkirk to France, — a piece of State policy. The Whig peers, concerning whom Chamberlain says, "The cursed republic had infected with its stinking breath several of the high nobility," had had the good sense to bow to the inevitable, to conform to the times, and to resume their seats in the House of Lords. To do so, it sufficed that they should take the oath of allegiance to the king. When one thinks of all this, the glorious reign, the excellent king, the august princes given back by divine mercy to the people's love; when one remembers that such persons as Monk, and later on Jefferies, had rallied round the throne; that they had been suitably rewarded for their loyalty and zeal by the most splendid appointments and the most lucrative offices; that Lord Clancharlie could not be ignorant of this, and that it only depended on himself to be seated by their side, glorious in his honours; that England had, thanks to her king, risen again to the summit of prosperity; that London was all banquets and carousals; that everybody was rich and enthusiastic; that the court was gallant, gay, and magnificent, — if by chance, far from these splendours, in some melancholy, indescribable half-light, like nightfall, that old man, clad in the same garb as the common people, was observed standing on the shore of the lake, pale, absent-minded, heedless of the storm and of the winter's cold, walking as if at random, his eye fixed on the ground, his white hair waving in the wind, silent, pensive, solitary, who could forbear to smile? Was not such a being nothing more or less than a madman?

Thinking of Lord Clancharlie, of what he might have been and what he was, one proved oneself very charitable if one only smiled. Many persons laughed aloud,

others could not restrain their wrath. It is easy to understand how greatly men of sense were shocked by the insolence which his isolation evinced. There was one extenuating circumstance: Lord Clancharlie had never had any brains. Every one agreed on that point.

G. C. Hower, "1915
Nov. 13, 1912
abbott Hower

II.

It is disagreeable to see one's fellow-creature obstinate. Imitations of Regulus are not popular, and public opinion holds them in some derision. Stubborn people are so many reproaches, and we have a right to laugh at them. Besides, to sum up, are these perversities, these rugged notches, really virtues? Is there not a good deal of ostentation in these excessive parades of self-abnegation and honour? Are they not mere show and pretence? Why this pretence of solitude and exile? To carry nothing to extremes is the wise man's maxim. Oppose if you choose, blame if you will, but decently, — crying out all the while, "Long live the King!" The greatest of virtues is common-sense. What falls ought to fall, what succeeds ought to succeed. Providence acts advisedly; it crowns him who deserves the crown. Do you pretend to know better than Providence? When matters are settled; when one *régime* has replaced another; when success is the scale in which truth and falsehood are weighed, — then doubt is no longer possible. The honest man goes over to the winning side; and although it may happen to serve his fortune and his family, he does not allow himself to be influenced by that consideration, but thinking only of the public weal, holds out his hand heartily to the conqueror.

What would become of the State if no one consented to serve it? Would not everything come to a standstill?

To keep his place is the duty of a good citizen. Learn to sacrifice your secret preferences. Appointments must be filled, and some one must sacrifice himself. To yield prompt obedience to the powers that be is truly laudable. The retirement of public officials would paralyze the State. What, banish yourself? How weak! Set yourself up as an example? What vanity! Defy established authority? What audacity! What do you set yourself up to be, I wonder? Learn that we are just as good as you. If we chose, we also could be intractable and untamable, and do worse things than you; but we prefer to be sensible people. Because I am a Trimalcion, do you think that I could not be a Cato? What nonsense!

III.

Never was a situation more clearly defined or more decisive than that of 1660. Never had a course of conduct been more plainly indicated to a well-ordered mind. England was out of Cromwell's grasp. Under the republic many irregularities had been committed. British preponderance had been created. With the aid of the Thirty-Years' war, Germany had been overcome; with the aid of the Fronde, France had been humiliated; with the aid of the Duke of Braganza, the power of Spain had been lessened. Cromwell had tamed Mazarin; in signing treaties the Protector of England wrote his name above that of the King of France. The United Provinces had been forced to pay a fine of eight millions; Algiers and Tunis had been attacked, Jamaica conquered, Lisbon humbled; French rivalry had been encouraged in Barcelona, and Masaniello in Naples; Portugal had been made fast to England; the seas had been cleared of Barbary pirates from Gibraltar to Crete; maritime dom-

ination had been established under two forms, Victory and Commerce. On the 10th of August, 1653, the man of thirty-three victories, — the old Admiral who called himself the sailors' grandfather, Martin Happertz Tromp, who had beaten the Spanish, — was defeated by the English fleet. The Atlantic had been cleared of the Spanish navy, the Pacific of the Dutch, the Mediterranean of the Venetian; and by the Navigation Act, England had taken possession of the sea-coast of the world. Through the ocean she commanded the world. At sea the Dutch flag humbly saluted the British flag; France, in the person of the Ambassador Mancini, bent the knee to Oliver Cromwell; and Cromwell played with Calais and Dunkirk as with two shuttlecocks on a battledore. The continent had been taught to tremble, peace had been dictated, war declared, the British Ensign raised on every pinnacle. A single regiment of the Protector's Ironsides excited as much terror in Europe as an entire army. Cromwell used to say, "I mean the Republic of England to be respected, as the Republic of Rome was respected. Delusions were no longer held sacred; speech was free, the press was free. In the public street men said what they listed; they printed what they pleased without control or censorship. The equilibrium of thrones had been destroyed. The whole order of European monarchy, of which the Stuarts formed a link, had been overturned.

But at last England had escaped from this odious order of things, and had won forgiveness for it. The indulgent Charles II. had issued the proclamation of Breda; he had kindly consented to ignore the period of English history in which the son of the Huntingdon brewer placed his foot on the neck of Louis XIV. England said its *meâ culpâ*, and breathed again. The cup of joy was, as we have just said, full; gibbets for the regi-

cides adding to the universal delight. A restoration is charming, but a few gibbets are not out of place, and it is necessary to satisfy the public conscience. To be good subjects was thenceforth the people's sole ambition. The spirit of lawlessness had been expelled. Loyalty was re-established. Men had recovered from the follies of politics; they sneered at revolution, they jeered at the republic; and as to those times when such strange words as *Right, Liberty, Progress,* had been in every one's mouth, why, they laughed at such bombast! How admirable this return to common-sense was! England had been in a dream. What joy to be free from such errors! Was ever anything so mad? Where should we be if every one had his rights? Fancy every one's having a hand in the government! Can you imagine a city ruled by its citizens? Why, the citizens are the team, and the team cannot act as driver. To put to the vote is to throw to the winds. Would you have States driven like clouds? Disorder cannot build up order. With chaos for an architect, the edifice would be a Babel. Besides, how tyrannical this pretended liberty is! As for me, I wish to enjoy myself, not to govern. It is a bore to have to vote; I want to dance. How providential that we have a prince to take care of us all! How kind the king is to take so much trouble for our sakes! Besides, he is to the manner born; he knows what 's what; it 's his business. Peace, war, legislation, finance, — what have the people to do with such things. Of course the people have to pay, of course the people have to serve; but that should suffice. They have a place in policy; from them come two essential things, — the army and the budget. To be liable to contribute, and to be liable to serve, — is not that enough? What more can they want? They are the military and the financial arm, — a magnificent *rôle.* The king reigns for

them, and they must reward him accordingly. Taxation and the civil list are the salaries paid by the people and earned by the prince. The people give their blood and their money, in return for which they are governed. To wish to govern themselves, — what an absurd idea! They require a guide; being ignorant, they are blind. Has not the blind man his dog? Only the people have a lion, the king, who consents to play the dog. How kind of him! Why are the people ignorant? Because it is good for them to be ignorant. Ignorance is the guardian of Virtue. Where there are no possibilities of improvement there is no ambition. The ignorant man is in useful darkness, which, suppressing sight, suppresses covetousness: hence innocence. He who reads, thinks, he who thinks, reasons. But not to reason is duty and happiness as well. These truths are incontestable; society is based on them.

These sound social doctrines had been re-established in England. At the same time a correct taste in literature was reviving. Shakspeare was despised, Dryden admired. "Dryden is the greatest poet of England, and of the century," said Atterbury, the translator of "Achitophel." This was about the time when M. Huet, Bishop of Avranches, wrote to Saumaise, who had done the author of "Paradise Lost" the honour to refute and abuse him: "How can you trouble yourself about so mean a thing as that Milton?" Everything was falling into its proper place: Dryden above, Shakspeare below; Charles II. on the throne, Cromwell on the gibbet. England was raising herself out of the shame and the excesses of the past. It is a great happiness for nations to be led back by monarchy to good order in the State and good taste in letters.

It is hard to believe that such benefits should not be appreciated. To turn the cold shoulder to Charles II.

to reward with ingratitude the magnanimity which he displayed in ascending the throne, — was not such conduct abominable? Lord Linnæus Clancharlie had inflicted this vexation upon honest men. To sulk at his country's happiness, — alack, what folly! We know that in 1650 Parliament had drawn up this form of declaration: "I promise to remain faithful to the republic, without king, sovereign, or lord." Under pretext of having taken this monstrous oath, Lord Clancharlie was living out of the kingdom, and in the face of the general rejoicing thought that he had the right to be sad. He had a profound esteem for that which was no more, and was absurdly attached to the former state of things. To excuse him was impossible; even the most charitably disposed abandoned him. Some had done him the honour to believe that he had entered the republican ranks only to observe more closely the flaws in the republican armour, and to smite it the more surely when the day should come to strike for the sacred cause of the king. These lurkings in ambush for the convenient hour to stab the enemy in the back are attributes of loyalty. Such a line of conduct had been expected of Lord Clancharlie, so strong was the wish to judge him favourably; but, in the face of his strange persistence in republicanism, people were obliged to lower their estimate of him. Evidently Lord Clancharlie was confirmed in his convictions; that is to say, he was an idiot!

The explanation given by the indulgent wavered between puerile stubbornness and senile obstinacy. The severe and the just went much further; they cursed the name of the renegade. Folly has its rights, but it has also its limits. A man may be a brute, but he has no right to be a rebel. And, after all, who was this Lord Clancharlie? A deserter. He had left his camp, that

of the aristocracy, for that of the enemy, the people. This faithful man was a traitor. It is true that he was a traitor to the stronger side and faithful to the weaker; it is true that the camp repudiated by him was the camp of the conqueror, and the camp adopted by him the camp of the vanquished; it is true that by his treason he lost everything, — his political privileges and his home, his title and his country. He gained nothing but ridicule, he attained no benefit but exile. But what does all this prove? Merely that he was a fool. Plainly a fool and a traitor in one. Let a man be as great a fool as he likes, provided he does not set a bad example. Fools need only be civil, and in consideration thereof they may aim at being the basis of monarchies.

The narrowness of Clancharlie's mind was incomprehensible. His eyes were still dazzled by the phantasmagoria of the revolution. He had allowed himself to be taken in by the republic, — yes, and cast out. He was a disgrace to his country; the attitude he assumed was downright felony. Absence was an insult. He held aloof from the public happiness as from the plague. In his voluntary banishment he merely sought a refuge from the national rejoicing. Over the widespread gladness at the revival of the monarchy, denounced by him as a lazaretto, he was the black flag. What! could he thus look askance at order re-established, a nation exalted, and a religion restored? Why cast a shadow over such serenity? Take umbrage at England's contentment! Must he be the one blot in the clear blue sky? Protest against a nation's will; refuse his Yes to the universal consent, — it would be disgusting, if it were not the part of a fool.

Clancharlie could not have taken into account the fact that it did not matter if one had taken the wrong turn with Cromwell, so long as one found one's way

back into the right path with Monk. Take Monk's case. He is in command of the republican army. Charles II., having been informed of his honesty, writes to him. Monk, who combines virtue with tact, dissimulates at first; then suddenly at the head of his troops dissolves the rebel parliament, and re-establishes the king on the throne. Monk is created Duke of Albemarle, has the honour of having saved society, becomes very rich, sheds a glory over his time, and is created Knight of the Garter, with a prospect of being buried in Westminster Abbey. Such is the reward of British fidelity!

Lord Clancharlie could never rise to a sense of duty thus carried out. He had the infatuation and obstinacy of an exile, he contented himself with hollow phrases; he was tongue-tied by pride. The words "conscience" and "dignity" are but words, after all; one must penetrate to the depths. These depths Lord Clancharlie had not reached. His "eye was single," and before committing an act, he wished to observe it so closely as to be able to judge of it in more senses than one. Hence arose absurd disgust to the facts examined. No man can be a statesman who gives way to such overstrained delicacy. Excess of conscientiousness degenerates into an infirmity. Distrust scruples; they drag you too far. Exaggerated fidelity is like a ladder leading into a cavern, — one step down, another, then another; and there you are in the dark. The clever re-ascend; fools remain there. Conscience must not be allowed to practise such austerity. If it is, it is sure to relapse eventually into the depths of political prudery, as in Lord Clancharlie's case. Such principles result in one's ruin. He was walking, with his hands behind him, along the shores of the Lake of Geneva. A fine way of getting on!

In London they sometimes spoke of the exile. He

was tried before the tribunal of public opinion. They pleaded for and against him. The cause having been heard, he was acquitted on the ground of stupidity. Many zealous friends of the former republic had given their adherence to the Stuarts; for this they deserve praise. They naturally calumniated him a little. The obstinate are repulsive to the compliant. Men of sense, anxious for good places at court, and weary of his disagreeable attitude, took pleasure in saying, "If he has not rallied to the throne, it is because he has not been sufficiently paid," etc. "He wanted the chancellorship which the king has given to Hyde." One of his old friends even went so far as to whisper, "He told me so himself."

Remote as was the solitude of Linnæus Clancharlie, a little of this talk reached him now and then through other outlaws whom he met, and through that old regicide, Andrew Broughton, who lived at Lausanne. Clancharlie confined himself to an imperceptible shrug of the shoulders, a sign of profound disgust with him. On one occasion he added to the shrug these few words, uttered in a low voice, "I pity those who believe such things."

IV.

Charles II., good man! scorned him. The happiness of England under Charles II. was more than happiness, it was enchantment. A restoration is like an old oil painting re-varnished. All the past reappeared, good old manners returned, beautiful women reigned and governed. Evelyn notices it. We read in his journal, "Luxury, profaneness, contempt of God! I saw the king on Sunday evening with his courtesans, Portsmouth, Cleveland, Mazarin, and two or three others, all nearly naked, in the gaming-room." We feel that there is ill-

nature in this description, for Evelyn was a grumbling Puritan, tainted with republican notions. He did not appreciate the profitable example set by kings in those grand Babylonian gaieties, which, after all, provide employment for the poor. He did not understand the utility of vice. Here is a maxim: Do not extirpate vice, if you want to have charming women; if you do, you are like idiots who destroy the chrysalis while they delight in the butterfly.

Charles II., as we have said, scarcely remembered that a rebel called Clancharlie existed; but James II. was more mindful of him. Charles II. governed gently, it was his way; we may add that he did not govern the worse on that account. A sailor sometimes makes, on a rope intended to baffle the wind, a slack knot which he leaves to the wind to tighten. Such is the stupidity of the storm and of a nation. The slack knot soon becomes a tight one. So did the government of Charles II.

Under James II. the throttling began, — a necessary throttling of what remained of the revolution. James II. had a laudable ambition to be an efficient king. The reign of Charles II. was, in his opinion, but an attempt at restoration. James wished for a still more complete restoration of the old order of things. In 1660, he deplored that they had confined themselves to the hanging of ten regicides. He was a more genuine reconstructor of authority. He infused vigour into serious principles. He installed true justice, which is superior to sentimental declamations, and attends, above all things, to the interests of society. In his protecting severities we recognize the father of the State. He intrusted the hand of justice to Jefferies and its sword to Kirke. That useful colonel one day hung and rehung the same man, a republican; asking him each time: "Will you renounce the republic?" The villain, having each time

said "No," was finally despatched. "I hanged him four times," said Kirke, complacently. The renewal of executions is a sure sign of power in the executive authority. Lady Lisle, who, though she had sent her son to fight against Monmouth, had concealed two rebels in her house, was executed; another rebel, having been honourable enough to declare that an anabaptist female had given him shelter, was pardoned, and the woman was burned alive. Kirke, on another occasion, gave a town to understand that he knew its principles to be republican, by hanging nineteen burgesses.

These reprisals were certainly legitimate, for it must be remembered that under Cromwell they cut off the noses and ears of the stone saints in the churches. James II., who had had the good sense to choose Jefferies and Kirke, was a prince imbued with true religion; he practised mortification in the ugliness of his mistresses; he listened to le Père la Colombière, a preacher almost as unctuous as le Père Cheminais, but with more fire, who had the glory of being, during the first part of his life, the counsellor of James II., and during the latter part the ideal of Marie Alacoque. It was probably due to this strong religious nourishment that later on James II. was enabled to bear exile with dignity, and to exhibit, in his retirement at Saint Germain, the spectacle of a king rising superior to adversity, calmly touching for king's evil, and conversing with Jesuits.

It will be readily understood that such a king would trouble himself to a considerable extent about such a rebel as Lord Linnæus Clancharlie. Hereditary peerages have a certain hold on the future, and it was evident that if any precautions were necessary with regard to that lord, James II. was not the man to hesitate.

CHAPTER II.

LORD DAVID DIRRY-MOIR.

I.

LORD LINNÆUS CLANCHARLIE had not always been old and proscribed; he had had his period of youth and passion. We know from Harrison and Pride that Cromwell, when young, loved women and pleasure, — a taste which generally (another aspect of the "woman question") betrays a seditious man. Distrust the loosely clasped girdle (*Male præcinctum juvenem cavete*). Lord Clancharlie, like Cromwell, had had his wild hours and his irregularities. He was known to have had a natural child, a son. This son was born in England in the last days of the republic, just as his father was going into exile; hence he had never seen his father. This illegitimate son of Lord Clancharlie had grown up as page at the court of Charles II. He was styled Lord David Dirry-Moir: he was a lord by courtesy, his mother being a woman of quality.

The mother, while Lord Clancharlie was playing the owl in Switzerland, made up her mind, being a beauty, to give up sulking, and was forgiven for that Goth her first lover, by one who was undeniably a polished gentleman, and at the same time a royalist, — no less a person, in fact, than the king himself. She had been the mistress of Charles II. but a short time, sufficiently long, however, to have made his Majesty (who was delighted to have won so pretty a woman from the republic) bestow on the little Lord David, the son of his divinity,

the office of keeper of the stick, — which made that young man, boarded at the king's expense, by a natural revulsion of feeling an ardent adherent of the Stuarts. Lord David was for some time one of the hundred and seventy sword-bearers; afterwards, entering the corps of pensioners, he became one of the forty who bear the gilded halberd. He had, besides being one of the noble company instituted by Henry VIII. as a body-guard, the privilege of placing the dishes on the king's table. Thus it was that while his father was growing grey in exile, Lord David was prospering under Charles II. After which he prospered under James II. The king is dead: Long live the king! It is the *non deficit alter, aureus.*

It was on the accession of the Duke of York that the young man obtained permission to call himself David Lord Dirry-Moir, from an estate which he inherited from his mother (who had just died) in that great forest of Scotland, where lives the krag, a bird which scoops out a nest with its beak in the trunk of the oak.

II.

James II. was a king, and pretended to be a great general. He loved to surround himself with young officers. He showed himself frequently in public on horseback, in a helmet and cuirass, with a huge projecting wig hanging below the helmet and over the cuirass, — a sort of equestrian statue of imbecile war. He took a fancy to young Lord David; he liked the royalist for being the son of a republican. A renegade father does not injure the foundation of a court fortune. The king made Lord David gentleman of the bedchamber, at a salary of a thousand a year. It was a fine promotion. A gentleman of the bedchamber sleeps near the king

every night, on a bed which is made up for him. There are twelve gentlemen, who relieve one another.

Lord David, while he held that post, was also head of the king's granary, giving out corn for the horses and receiving a salary of £260. Under him were the five coachmen of the king, the five postilions of the king, the five grooms of the king, the twelve footmen of the king, and the four chair-bearers of the king. He had the management of the race-horses which the king kept at Newmarket, and which cost his Majesty £600 a year. He worked his will on the king's wardrobe, from which the knights of the garter are furnished with their robes of ceremony. The usher of the black rod bowed down to the earth before him. That usher, under James II., was the Chevalier Duppa. Mr. Baker, who was clerk of the crown, and Mr. Brown, who was clerk of the Parliament, also bowed low before Lord David. The court of England, which is magnificent, is a model of hospitality. Lord David presided, as one of the twelve, at banquets and receptions. He had the glory of standing behind the king on offertory days, when the king gives to the church the golden *byzantium;* on collar-days, when the king wears the collar of his order; on communion days, when no one takes the sacrament except the king and the princes. It was he who, on Holy Thursday, introduced into his Majesty's presence the twelve poor men to whom the king gives as many silver pence as he is years old, and as many shillings as the years of his reign. The duty devolved on him, when the king was ill, to call to the assistance of his Majesty the two grooms of the almonry, who are priests, and to prevent the approach of doctors without permission from the council of State. Besides, he was lieutenant-colonel of the Scotch Regiment of Guards, the one which plays the Scottish march. As such, he made several cam-

paigns, and with glory; for he was a gallant soldier. He was a brave lord, well-made, handsome, generous, and majestic in look and in manner. His person was like his quality. He was tall in stature, as well as exalted in birth. At one time he stood a chance of being made groom of the stole, which would have given him the privilege of putting the king's shirt on his Majesty: but to hold that office it was necessary to be either prince or peer. Now, to create a peer is a serious thing, inasmuch as it is first necessary to create a peerage; and that makes many people jealous. It is a favour, — but a favour that gains the king one friend and one hundred enemies, without taking into account that the one friend becomes ungrateful. James II. was not inclined to create peerages, but he transferred them freely. The transfer of a peerage produces no sensation; it is simply the continuation of a name. The friendly monarch had no objection to raising Lord David Dirry-Moir to the upper house, provided he could do so by means of a substituted peerage. Nothing would have pleased his Majesty better than to transform Lord David Dirry-Moir lord by courtesy into a lord by right.

III.

The opportunity occurred. One day it was announced that several things had happened to the old exile Lord Clancharlie, the most important of which was that he had died. Death does men this much good, — it makes them the subject of conversation for a time. People told what they knew, or what they thought they knew, about the last years of Lord Linnæus. What they said was probably a mixture of hearsay and conjecture. If these tales were to be credited, Lord Clancharlie's republicanism was intensified towards the end of his days to the

extent of marrying (strange obstinacy on the part of the exile!) Ann Bradshaw, the daughter of a regicide: they were precise about the name. This lady had died, it was said, in giving birth to a boy. If these details should prove to be correct, this child would, of course, be the legitimate and rightful heir of Lord Clancharlie. These reports, however, were extremely vague in form, and were rumours rather than facts. Circumstances which happened in Switzerland in those days were as remote from the England of that period as those which take place in China from the England of to-day. Lord Clancharlie must have been fifty-nine at the time of his marriage, they said, and sixty at the birth of his son, and must have died shortly after, leaving his infant bereft both of father and mother. This was possible, perhaps, but improbable. They added that the child was beautiful as the day, — just as we read in all the fairy tales.

King James put an end to these rumours (which must have been entirely without foundation) by declaring, one fine morning, Lord David Dirry-Moir sole and positive heir *in default of legitimate issue*, and by his royal pleasure, of Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, his natural father, *the absence of all other issue and descent being established;* and patents of this grant were duly registered in the House of Lords. By these patents the king instated Lord David Dirry-Moir in all the titles, rights, and prerogatives of the late Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, on the sole condition that Lord David should wed, when she attained a marriageable age, a certain girl who was at that time a mere infant a few months old, and whom the king in her cradle had created a duchess, no one knew exactly why, — or, rather, every one knew why. This little infant was called the Duchess Josiana. Spanish names were then all the rage in England. One

of Charles II.'s bastards was called Carlos Earl of Plymouth. It is likely that Josiana was a contraction for Josefa-y-Ana. Josiana, however, may have been a name, — the feminine of Josias. One of Henri III.'s gentlemen was called Josias du Passage. It was to this little duchess that the king granted the peerage of Clancharlie. She was a peeress till there should be a peer; the peer was to be her husband. The peerage was founded on a double castleward, the barony of Clancharlie and the barony of Hunkerville; besides, the barons of Clancharlie were, as a reward for some ancient deed of prowess, and by royal license, Marquises of Corleone in Sicily.

Peers of England cannot bear foreign titles. There are, nevertheless, exceptions; thus Henry Arundel, Baron Arundel of Wardour, was, as well as Lord Clifford, a Count of the Holy Roman Empire, of which Lord Cowper is a prince. The Duke of Hamilton is Duke of Chatelherault, in France; Basil Fielding, Earl of Denbigh, is Count of Hapsburg, of Lauffenberg, and of Rheinfelden, in Germany. The Duke of Marlborough was Prince of Mindelheim in Suabia, just as the Duke of Wellington was Prince of Waterloo in Belgium. This same Lord Wellington was also a Spanish Duke of Ciudad Rodrigo, and Portuguese Count of Vimiera.

There were in England, and there are still, both entailed and unentailed estates. The lands of the Lords of Clancharlie were all entailed. These lands, burghs, bailiwicks, fiefs, rents, freeholds, and domains, adherent to the peerage of Clancharlie-Hunkerville, now belonged provisionally to Lady Josiana; and the king declared that, once married to Josiana, Lord David Dirry-Moir should be Baron Clancharlie. Besides the Clancharlie inheritance, Lady Josiana had her own private fortune. She possessed great wealth, much of

which was derived from the gifts of *Madame sans queue* — in other words, Madame — to the Duke of York. Henrietta of England, Duchess of Orleans, the lady of highest rank in France after the queen, was called *Madame sans queue.*

IV.

Having prospered under Charles and James, Lord David continued to prosper under William. His Jacobite feelings did not reach to the extent of following James into exile. While he continued to love his legitimate king, he had the good sense to serve the usurper; he was, moreover, although sometimes disposed to rebel against discipline, an excellent officer. He exchanged from the land to the sea forces, and distinguished himself in the White Squadron; he rose in it to be what was then called captain of a light frigate. Altogether he was a very fine fellow, extremely elegant in his vices; a bit of a poet, like everybody else at that epoch; a good servant of the State and a good servant to the prince; assiduous at feasts, at ladies' receptions, at ceremonials, and in battle; servile in a gentlemanly way, and yet haughty in the extreme; with eyesight dull or keen, according to the object examined; in manner obsequious or arrogant, as occasion required; frank and sincere on first acquaintance, with the power of assuming the mask afterwards; very observant of the smiles and frowns of his royal master; careless before a sword's point; always ready with heroism and complacency to risk his life at a sign from his Majesty; capable of any insult but of no impoliteness; a man of courtesy and etiquette, proud of kneeling at great regal ceremonies; of a gay valour; a courtier on the surface, a paladin below; and young at forty-five. Lord David sang French songs charm-

Lord David Dirry-Moir.

ingly, — an elegant accomplishment which had delighted Charles II. He loved eloquence and fine speaking, and was a great admirer of those celebrated discourses which are called the funeral orations of Bossuet. From his mother he had inherited almost enough to live on, — about £10,000 a year. He managed to get on with it, by running into debt. In magnificence, extravagance, and novelty he was without a rival. Directly he was copied, he changed his fashion. On horseback he wore loose boots of cow-hide, which turned over, with spurs. He had hats like nobody else's, unheard-of lace, and bands of which he alone had the pattern.

CHAPTER III.

THE DUCHESS JOSIANA.

I.

IN 1705, although Lady Josiana was twenty-three and Lord David forty-four, the wedding had not yet taken place, and that for the best reason in the world. Did they hate each other? Far from it; but what cannot escape you inspires you with no haste to obtain it. Josiana wanted to remain free; David, to remain young. To have no tie until as late as possible seemed to him to be a prolongation of youth. Middle-aged young men abounded in those rakish times; they grew grey as young fops. The wig was an accomplice; later on, powder became the auxiliary. At fifty-five Lord Charles Gerrard, Baron Gerrard, one of the Gerrards of Bromley, filled London with his successes; the young and pretty Duchess of Buckingham, Countess of Coventry, made a fool of herself for love of the handsome Thomas Bellasys, Viscount Fauconberg, who was sixty-seven. Men quoted the famous verses of Corneille, the septuagenarian, to a girl of twenty, beginning, "Marquise, si mon visage." Women, too, had their successes in the autumn of life, — witness Ninon and Marion. Such were the models of the day.

Josiana and David were carrying on a flirtation of a peculiar kind. They did not love, they pleased, each other. To be in each other's society sufficed them: why hasten the conclusion? The novels of those days carried lovers and engaged couples only to that stage which was the most becoming. Besides, Josiana, while she knew

herself to be a bastard, felt herself a princess, and carried her authority over him with a high hand in all their arrangements. She had a fancy for Lord David. He was handsome; but she cared very little about that. She considered him elegant: that was the all-important thing. To be fashionable is everything. Caliban, fashionable and magnificent, would distance Ariel poor. Lord David was handsome; so much the better. The danger in being handsome is being insipid; and that he was not. He betted, boxed, ran into debt. Josiana was proud of his horses, his dogs, his losses at play, and especially of his mistresses. Lord David, on his side, bowed down before the fascinations of the Duchess Josiana, — a maiden without spot or scruple, haughty, inaccessible, and audacious. He addressed sonnets to her, which Josiana sometimes read. In these sonnets he declared that to possess Josiana would be to mount to the stars; but this did not prevent him from postponing the ascent until the following year. He waited patiently in the ante-chamber outside Josiana's heart; and this suited both of them. Every one at court commended the good taste of this delay. Lady Josiana said, "It is a pity that I should be obliged to marry Lord David, — I, who would desire nothing better than to be in love with him!"

Josiana was "the flesh" personified. It would be difficult to conceive of a more magnificent creature. She was very tall, — too tall. Her hair was of that tint which might be called red gold. She was plump, fresh, strong, and rosy, and possessed of immense boldness and wit. She had eyes which were too eloquent. She had neither lovers nor chastity. She walled herself around with pride. Men! fie! a god alone would be worthy of her, — a god or a monster. If virtue consists in impregnability, then Josiana was the most virtuous

of women, though by no means the most innocent. She disdained intrigues; but she would not have been displeased had she been suspected of some, provided that they had been of a brilliant character proportionate to the merits of one so exalted as herself. She thought little of her reputation, but a great deal of her glory. To appear yielding, and yet be unapproachable, is perfection. Josiana felt herself majestic and material. Hers was a cumbrous type of beauty. She usurped rather than charmed; she trod upon hearts; she was of the earth earthy. She would have been as much astonished to find a soul in her bosom as to see wings on her back. She discoursed learnedly on Locke; she was polite; she was even suspected of knowing Arabic.

To be flesh and to be a woman are two very different things. Where a woman is vulnerable, — on the side of pity for instance, which so readily turns to love, — Josiana was not. Yet she was not unfeeling. The old comparison of flesh with marble is absolutely false. The beauty of flesh consists in not being marble. Its beauty is to palpitate, to tremble, to blush, to bleed; to have firmness without hardness; to be white without being cold; to have its sensations and its infirmities. Its beauty is to be life, and marble is death. Flesh, when it attains a certain degree of beauty, has almost a claim to the right of nudity; it conceals itself in its own dazzling charms as in a veil. He who looked upon Josiana nude, would have perceived her outlines only through a sort of halo. She would have shown herself without hesitation to a satyr or a eunuch. She had the self-possession of a goddess. To have made her nudity a torment to an ever-pursuing Tantalus, would have been a delight to her.

The king had made her a duchess, and Jupiter a Nereid. In admiring her you felt yourself becoming at once a

pagan and a lackey. She seemed to have emerged from the foam of the ocean. In her there was something of the wave, of chance, of the patrician, and of the tempest. She was well read and accomplished. Never had a passion approached her, yet she had sounded them all. She felt an instinctive loathing of their realization, and at the same time a longing for them. If she had stabbed herself, it would, like Lucretia, not have been until afterwards. She was a virgin stained with every defilement of an imaginary sort. She was a possible Astarte embodied in a real Diana. She was, in the insolence of her high birth, at once tempting and inaccessible. Nevertheless, she might find it amusing to plan a fall for herself. She dwelt in a halo of glory, half wishing to descend from it, and perhaps feeling curious to know what a fall was like. She was a little too heavy for her cloud. To err is a diversion. Princely unconstraint has the privilege of experiment; and what is frailty in a plebeian, is only frolic in a duchess. Josiana was in everything — in birth, in beauty, in irony, in brilliancy — almost a queen. She had felt a momentary infatuation for Louis de Boufflers, who used to break horse-shoes between his fingers. She regretted that Hercules was dead. She lived in some undefined expectation of a voluptuous and supreme ideal. Morally, Josiana brought to one's mind the line of Horace, *Desinit in piscem*, —

"Un beau torse de femme en hydre se termine."

Hers was a noble neck, a splendid bosom, tranquilly heaving over a proud and arrogant heart, a glance full of life and light, a countenance pure and haughty; but (who knows?) below the surface was there not, in a semi-transparent and misty depth, an undulating, supernatural prolongation, perchance deformed and dragon-like, — proud virtue ending in vice in the depths of dreams?

II.

With all that she was a prude. It was the fashion. Remember Elizabeth. Elizabeth was of a type that prevailed in England for three centuries, — the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth. Elizabeth was more than English, she was Anglican. Hence the deep respect of the Episcopalian Church for that queen, — a respect resented by the Church of Rome, which counterbalanced it with a dash of excommunication. In the mouth of Sixtus V., when anathematizing Elizabeth, malediction turned to madrigal: "Un gran cervello di principessa," he says. Mary Stuart, less concerned with the church and more with the woman part of the question, had little respect for her sister Elizabeth, and wrote to her as queen to queen and coquette to prude: "Your disinclination to marriage arises from your not wishing to lose the liberty of being made love to." Mary Stuart toyed with the fan, Elizabeth with the axe. An uneven match. They were rivals, besides, in literature. Mary Stuart composed French verses; Elizabeth translated Horace. The ugly Elizabeth decreed herself beautiful; liked quatrains and acrostics; had the keys of towns presented to her by cupids; bit her lips, after the Italian fashion, rolled her eyes after the Spanish style; had in her wardrobe three thousand dresses and costumes, of which several were for the character of Minerva and Amphitrite; esteemed the Irish for the width of their shoulders; covered her farthingale with braids and spangles; loved roses; cursed, swore, and stamped; struck her maids of honour with her clinched fists; used to send Dudley to the devil, beat Burleigh the Chancellor, who would cry (poor old fool!), spat on Mathew, collared Hatton, boxed the ears of Essex, showed her legs to

Bassompierre, — and was a virgin. What she did for Bassompierre the Queen of Sheba had done for Solomon ;[1] consequently she was right, Holy Writ having created the precedent. That which is Biblical may well be Anglican. Biblical precedent even goes so far as to speak of a child who was called Ebnehaquem, or Melilechet; that is to say, "the Wise Man's son."

Why object to such manners? Cynicism is at least as good as hypocrisy. Nowadays England, whose Loyola is named Wesley, casts down her eyes a little at the remembrance of that past age; she is vexed at the memory, yet proud of it.

Amidst such manners as these, a taste for deformity existed, especially among women, more especially among beautiful women. What was the use of being beautiful if one did not possess a baboon? What was the charm of being a queen if one could not bandy words with a dwarf? Mary Stuart had "been kind" to the bandy-legged Rizzio. Maria Theresa of Spain had been "somewhat familiar" with a negro; hence the "black abbess." In the alcoves of the great century a hump was the fashion: witness the Marshal of Luxembourg; and before Luxembourg, Condé, "such a pretty little man!" Beauties themselves might be ill-made without detriment; that was admitted. Anne Boleyn had one breast bigger than the other, six fingers on one hand, and a projecting tooth; La Vallière was bandy-legged, — which did not hinder Henry VIII. from going mad for the one, and Louis XIV. for the other.

Morals were equally awry. There was not a woman of high rank who was not a sort of monster. Every Agnes was a Melusina at heart. They were women by day and ghouls by night. They sought the scaffold to

[1] Regina Saba coram rege crura denudavit. — Schicklardus *in Proœmio Tarich Jersici, f.* 65.

kiss the heads of the newly beheaded on their iron stakes. Marguerite de Valois, the grandmother of prudes, wore, fastened to her belt, the hearts of her dead lovers in tin boxes, padlocked. In the eighteenth century the Duchess de Berry, daughter of the Regent, was herself an obscene and royal type of all these creatures.

These fine ladies, moreover, knew Latin. From the sixteenth century this had been accounted a feminine accomplishment. Lady Jane Grey had carried the fashion to the extent of knowing Hebrew. The Duchess Josiana Latinized. Then (another fine thing) she was secretly a Catholic, — after the manner of her uncle, Charles II., rather than her father, James II. James II. had lost his crown by reason of his Catholicism, and Josiana did not care to risk her peerage. Thus it was that while she was a Catholic among her intimate friends and the refined of both sexes, she was outwardly a Protestant for the benefit of the riff-raff. This is a pleasant view to take of religion. You enjoy all the good things connected with the Episcopalian Church, and later on you die, like Grotius, in the odour of Catholicity, with the glory of having a mass said for you by le Père Petau.

Although plump and healthy, Josiana was, we repeat, a perfect prude. At times, her sleepy and voluptuous way of dragging out the end of her phrases was like the creeping of a tiger's paws in the jungle. When one has not got Olympus, one must be content with the Hotel de Rambouillet. Juno resolves herself into Araminta. A pretension to divinity not admitted, creates affectation. Instead of thunder-claps there is impertinence. The temple shrivels into the boudoir. Unable to be a goddess, one becomes a graven image. Besides, there is in prudery a certain pedantry which is pleasing to

women. The coquette and the pedant are near neighbours. Their kinship is visible in the fop. The subtile is derived from the sensual. Gluttony affects delicacy; a grimace of disgust conceals cupidity. And then woman feels her weak point guarded by all that casuistry of gallantry which takes the place of scruples in prudes. It is a line of circumvallation with a ditch. Every prude puts on an air of repugnance; it is a protection. She will consent eventually, but she disdains — for the present.

Josiana had an uneasy conscience. She felt such a leaning towards immodesty that she was a prude. The very pride which causes us to shrink from certain vices leads us into others of an entirely different character. It was the excessive effort to be chaste which made Josiana a prude. To be too much on the defensive evinces a secret desire for attack; the truly modest woman is not strait-laced. Josiana shut herself up in the arrogance of the exceptional circumstances of her rank, meditating, perhaps, all the while some sudden lapse from it.

It was the dawn of the eighteenth century. England was a sketch of what France was during the regency. Walpole and Dubois were not unlike. Marlborough was fighting against his former king, James II., to whom it was said he had sold his sister, Miss Churchill. Bolingbroke was in the height and Richelieu in the dawn of his glory. Gallantry found a certain medley of ranks convenient. Men were made equal by their vices as they were later on, perhaps, by their ideas. Degradation of rank, an aristocratic prelude, began what the revolution was to complete. It was not very far from the time when Jélyotte was seen sitting publicly in broad daylight, on the bed of the Marquise d'Epinay. It is true (for manners re-echo each other) that in the

sixteenth century Smeton's nightcap had been found under Anne Boleyn's pillow.

If the word woman signifies frailty, never was woman so womanly as then. Never, covering her frailty by her charms, and her weakness by her omnipotence, has she claimed absolution more imperiously. In making the forbidden the permitted fruit, Eve fell; in making the permitted the forbidden fruit, she triumphs. That is the climax. In the eighteenth century the wife bolts out her husband. She shuts herself up in Eden with Satan. Adam is left outside.

III.

All Josiana's instincts impelled her to yield herself wantonly rather than to give herself legally. To surrender one's self thus, is considered a sure indication of genius, recalls Menalcas and Amaryllis, and is almost a literary act. Mademoiselle de Scudéry, aside from the charm of ugliness (for ugliness has its charm), could have had no other motive for yielding to Pélisson.

The maiden a sovereign, the wife a subject, — such was the old English notion. Josiana was deferring the hour of subjection as long as she could. She must eventually marry Lord David, since such was the royal pleasure. It was a necessity, doubtless; but what a pity! Josiana appreciated Lord David, and showed him off. There was between them a tacit agreement neither to conclude nor to break off the engagement. They eluded each other. This method of making love — one step in advance, and two back — is expressed in the dances of the period, the minuet and the gavotte.

It is unbecoming to be married; it fades one's ribbons, and makes one look old. An espousal is a dreary ab-

sorption of brilliancy. A woman handed over to you by a notary, how commonplace! The brutality of marriage creates definite situations, suppresses the will, kills choice; has a syntax, like grammar; replaces inspiration by orthography; makes love a dictation; disperses all Life's mysteries; diminishes the rights both of sovereign and subject; by a turn of the scale destroys the charming equilibrium of the sexes: the one robust in bodily strength, the other all-powerful in feminine weakness, — strength on one side, beauty on the other; makes one a master, and the other a servant. While before marriage man is the slave, woman the queen. To make Love prosaically decent, how gross! to deprive it of all impropriety, how dull!

Lord David was no longer young. Forty is an age that tells upon a man. He was not conscious of the fact, however, and really looked only a little over thirty. He considered it more amusing to desire Josiana than to possess her. He possessed others; he had mistresses. On the other hand, Josiana had dreams.

The Duchess Josiana had a peculiarity which is less rare than is generally supposed. One of her eyes was blue and the other black. Her pupils were made for love and hate, for happiness and misery. Night and day were mingled in her look. Her ambition was this: to show herself capable of impossibilities. One day she said to Swift: "You people fancy that you know what scorn is." "You people," meant the human race. She was a skin-deep Papist; her Catholicism did not exceed the amount necessary for fashion. She would have been a Puseyite at the present day. She wore great dresses of velvet, satin, or moire, some composed of fifteen or sixteen yards of material, with embroideries of gold and silver, and round her waist many knots of pearls, alternating with other precious stones. She

was extravagant in gold lace. Sometimes she wore an embroidered cloth jacket, like a bachelor. She rode on a man's saddle, notwithstanding the invention of side-saddles introduced into England in the fourteenth century by Anne, wife of Richard II. She washed her face, arms, shoulders, and neck in sugar dissolved in white of egg, after the Castilian fashion. There came over her face when any one talked cleverly in her presence an appreciative smile of singular grace. She was free from malice, and rather good-natured than otherwise.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LEADER OF FASHION.

JOSIANA was bored. The fact is so natural as to be scarcely worth mentioning.

Lord David held the position of judge in the gay life of London. He was looked up to by the nobility and gentry. Let us mention one feat of Lord David: he was daring enough to wear his own hair. The reaction against the wig was beginning. Just as in 1824 Eugène Devéria was the first to allow his beard to grow, so in 1702 Price Devereux was the first to risk wearing his own hair in public disguised by artful curling; for to risk one's hair was almost to risk one's head. The indignation was universal, although Price Devereux was Viscount Hereford, and a peer of England. He was insulted; but the deed was well worth the insult. In the hottest part of the row Lord David suddenly appeared without his wig and in his own hair. Such conduct shakes the foundations of society. Lord David was insulted even more grossly than Viscount Hereford; yet he held his ground. Price Devereux was the first, Lord David Dirry-Moir was the second to do this. It is sometimes more difficult to be the second than the first. It requires less genius, but more courage. The first, intoxicated by the novelty, may ignore the danger; the second sees the abyss, and rushes into it. Lord David flung himself into the abyss of no longer wearing a wig. Later on these gentlemen found many imitators.

Following the examples of these two revolutionists, men summoned up sufficient courage to wear their own hair, and powder was introduced as an extenuating circumstance.

In order to establish an important period of history before we pass on, we should remark that the first blow in the war of wigs was really struck by a Queen, — Christina of Sweden, who wore man's clothes, and who appeared in 1680, with her hair of golden brown, powdered, and brushed up from her head. She had besides, says Misson, a slight beard. The Pope, in his turn, by a bull issued in March, 1694, had lessened the popularity of the wig, by taking it from the heads of bishops and priests, and by ordering churchmen to let their hair grow.

Lord David, then, did not wear a wig, and he did wear cow-hide boots. Such deeds of prowess made him a mark for public admiration. There was not a club of which he was not the leader; not a boxing-match in which he was not desired as referee. The referee is the arbitrator. He had drawn up the rules of several aristocratic clubs. He founded several resorts of fashionable society, — of which one, the Lady Guinea, was still in existence in Pall Mall, in 1772. The Lady Guinea was a club in which all the youth of the peerage congregated. They gambled there; the lowest stake allowed was a rouleau of fifty guineas, and there was never less than twenty thousand guineas on the table. By the side of each player was a little stand, on which to place his cup of tea and a gilt bowl in which to put the rouleaux of guineas. The players, like servants when cleaning knives, wore leather sleeves to save their lace, breast-plates of leather to protect their ruffles, and on their heads, to shelter their eyes from the glare of the lamps and to keep their curls in order, broad-brimmed hats covered with flowers. They were masked

to conceal their excitement, especially when playing the game of *quinze*. All, moreover, wore their coats hind-side before, for luck.

Lord David was a member of the Beefsteak Club, the Surly Club, and of the Splitfarthing Club; of the Cross Club, and the Scratchpenny Club; of the Sealed Knot, a Royalist Club; and of the Martinus Scribblerus, founded by Swift, to take the place of the Rota, founded by Milton. Though handsome, he belonged to the Ugly Club. This club was dedicated to deformity. The members agreed to fight, not about a beautiful woman, but about an ugly man. The hall of the club was adorned by hideous portraits,— Thersites, Triboulet, Duns, Hudibras, Scarron; over the chimney was Æsop, between two men, —Cocles and Camoëns, —each blind in one eye (Cocles being blind in the left, and Camoëns in the right eye), so arranged that the two profiles without eyes were turned to each other. The day that the beautiful Mrs. Visart caught the smallpox, the Ugly Club toasted her. This club was still in existence in the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Mirabeau was elected an honorary member.

Since the restoration of Charles II., revolutionary clubs had been abolished. The tavern in the little street by Moorfields where the Calf's Head Club was held, had been pulled down; it was so called because on the 30th of January, the day on which the blood of Charles I. flowed on the scaffold, the members had drunk to the health of Cromwell out of the skull of a calf. To republican clubs had succeeded monarchical clubs. In them people amused themselves with decency. There was the Hell-fire Club, where they played at being impious. It was a joust of sacrilege; hell was put up at auction there to the highest bidder in blasphemy. There was the Butting Club, so called from its

members butting folks with their heads. They found some street porter with a wide chest and a stupid countenance; they offered him, and compelled him if necessary, to accept a pot of porter, in return for which he was to allow them to butt him with their heads four times in the chest; and on this they betted. One day a man, a big, stalwart Welshman named Gogangerdd, expired at the third butt. This looked serious. An inquest was held, and the jury returned the following verdict: "Died of enlargement of the heart, caused by excessive drinking." Gogangerdd had certainly drunk the contents of the pot of porter.

There was the Fun Club. *Fun* is like *cant*, and like *humour*, — a word which is untranslatable. Fun is to farce what pepper is to salt. To get into a house and break a valuable mirror, slash the family portraits, poison the dog, put the cat in the aviary, is called "having a bit of fun." To give bad news which is untrue, whereby people put on mourning by mistake, is fun. It was fun to cut a square hole in the Holbein at Hampton Court. A member of the Fun Club would have deemed it a grand achievement to have broken the arm of the Venus of Milo. Under James II. a young millionaire nobleman who had during the night set fire to a thatched cottage, — a feat which made all London shriek with laughter, — was proclaimed the King of Fun. The poor devils in the cottage were saved in their night-clothes. The members of the Fun Club, all men of the highest rank, used to run about London during the hours when the citizens were asleep, pulling shutters off their hinges, cutting the pipes of pumps, filling up cisterns, digging up cultivated plots of ground, putting out lamps, sawing through the beams which supported houses, and breaking window-panes, especially in the poor quarters of the town. It was the rich who acted thus towards

AMUSEMENTS OF THE MOHAWK CLUB.

the poor. For this reason, no complaint was possible; that was the best of the joke. These manners have not altogether disappeared. In many places in England and in English possessions (at Guernsey, for instance) your house is now and then somewhat damaged during the night, or a fence broken, or the knocker twisted off your door. If it were the poor who did these things, they would be sent to jail; but they are done by pleasant young gentlemen.

The most fashionable of the clubs was presided over by a so-called emperor, who wore a crescent on his forehead, and was called the Grand Mohawk. The Mohawk surpassed the Fun. "Do evil for evil's sake" was the programme. The Mohawk Club had one great object, — to injure. To accomplish this object, all sorts of means were resorted to. In becoming a Mohawk, the members took an oath to that effect. To injure at any price, no matter when, no matter whom, no matter where, was a matter of duty. Every member of the Mohawk Club was bound to possess some accomplishment. One was "a dancing master;" that is to say, he made the rustics frisk about by pricking the calves of their legs with the point of his sword. Others knew how to make a man sweat; that is to say, a circle of gentlemen with drawn rapiers would surround a poor wretch, so that it was impossible for him not to turn his back upon some one of them; the gentleman he turned his back upon chastised him for it by a prick of his sword, which made him spring round; another prick in the back warned the fellow that a person of noble blood was behind him, — and so on, each one wounding him in turn; when the man, hemmed in by the circle of swords and covered with blood, had turned and danced about enough, they had him beaten by their servants in order to divert his mind. Others "punched the lion;"

that is, they gaily stopped a passer-by, broke his nose with a blow of the fist, and then shoved both thumbs into his eyes; if his eyes were gouged out, he was paid for them.

Such were the pastimes of the rich idlers of London about the beginning of the eighteenth century. The idlers of Paris also had theirs. About that time M. de Charolais was firing his gun at a citizen who chanced to be standing on his own threshold. Youth has had its amusements from time immemorial.

Lord David Dirry-Moir would gleefully set fire to a cottage of wood and thatch, just like the others, and scorch the inmates a little; but he always rebuilt their houses in stone. He assaulted two ladies. One was unmarried, — he gave her a portion; the other was married, — he had her husband appointed chaplain. Many praiseworthy improvements were due to him in cock-fighting. It was marvellous to see Lord David dress a cock for the pit. Cocks lay hold of each other by the feathers, as men seize each other by the hair. Lord David, therefore, made his cock as bald as possible. With a pair of scissors he cut off all the tail feathers, and all the feathers on the head and shoulders as well as those on the neck. "So much less for the enemy's beak," he used to say. Then he extended the cock's wings, and cut each feather, one after another, to a point, and thus the wings were furnished with darts. "That is for the enemy's eyes," he would say. Then he scraped its claws with a penknife, sharpened its nails, fitted steel gaffs on its spurs, spat on its head and spat on its neck, — anointing it with spittle, as they used to rub oil over athletes; then set it down in the pit, a formidable opponent, exclaiming, "That 's the way to make a cock an eagle; a bird of the poultry-yard a bird of the mountain."

Lord David attended prize-fights, and was their living law. On great occasions it was he who had the stakes driven in and ropes stretched, and who fixed the number of feet for the ring. When he was a second, he followed his man step by step, a bottle in one hand, a sponge in the other; crying out to him to *strike fair*, but suggesting all sorts of stratagems; advising him as he fought, wiping away the blood, raising him when overthrown, placing him on his knee, putting the mouth of the brandy bottle between his teeth, and from his own mouth, filled with water, blowing a fine rain into his eyes and ears, — a thing which revives even a dying man. If he was referee, he saw that there was no foul play; prevented any one, whomsoever he might be, from assisting the combatants, excepting the seconds; declared the man beaten who did not fairly face his opponent; saw that the time between the rounds did not exceed half a minute; prevented butting, declaring whoever resorted to it beaten; and forbade a man's being hit when down. All this scientific knowledge, however, did not make him a pedant, or destroy his ease of manner in society.

When Lord David was referee, rough, pimple-faced, unshorn friends of either combatant never dared to come to the aid of the failing man; nor in order to upset the chances of the betting jump over the barrier, enter the ring, break the ropes, pull down the stakes, or interfere in any way in the contest. He was one of the few referees they dared not attempt to bully.

No one could train like him. The pugilist whose trainer he consented to become was sure to win. Lord David would choose a Hercules, — massive as a rock, tall as a tower, — and make a child of him. The problem was to turn that human rock from a defensive to an offensive state. In this he excelled. Having once

adopted the Cyclops, he never left him. He became his nurse; he measured out his wine, weighed his meat, and counted his hours of sleep. It was he who invented the athlete's admirable rules, afterwards reproduced by Morely: in the morning, a raw egg and a glass of sherry; at twelve, some slices of a leg of mutton, almost raw, with tea; at four, toast and tea; in the evening, pale ale and toast; after which he undressed his man, rubbed him, and put him to bed. In the street, he never lost sight of him, keeping him out of every danger, — runaway horses, carriage-wheels, drunken soldiers, and pretty girls. He watched over his virtue. This maternal solicitude was continually adding some new accomplishment to the pupil's education. He taught him the blow with the fist which breaks the teeth, and the twist of the thumb which gouges out the eye. What could be more touching than this devotion? In this way he was also preparing himself for the public life to which he would be called later on. It is no easy matter to become an accomplished gentleman.

Lord David Dirry-Moir was passionately fond of open-air exhibitions, of shows, of circuses with wild beasts, of the caravans of mountebanks, of clowns, tumblers, merrymen, open-air farces, and the wonders of a fair. The true noble is he who smacks of the people. Therefore it was that Lord David frequented the taverns and low haunts of London and the Cinque Ports. In order to be able at need, and without compromising his rank in the white squadron, to be cheek-by-jowl with a topman or a calker, he used to wear a sailor's jacket when he went into the slums. For such disguise his not wearing a wig was convenient; for even under Louis XIV. the people clung to their hair like the lion to his mane. This gave him great freedom of action. The low people whom Lord David used to meet, and with

whom he mixed, held him in high esteem, without ever dreaming that he was a lord. They called him Tom-Jim-Jack. Under this name he was quite famous and very popular among the dregs of the people. He played the blackguard in a masterly style, and did not hesitate to use his fists if necessary. This phase of his fashionable life was highly appreciated by Lady Josiana.

CHAPTER V.

QUEEN ANNE.

I.

ABOVE this couple there was Anne, Queen of England. A very ordinary woman was Queen Anne. She was gay, benevolent, august — to a certain extent. No quality of hers amounted either to a virtue or to a vice. Her flesh was bloated, her wit heavy, her good-nature stupid. She was at once stubborn and weak. As a wife, she was both faithless and faithful, — having favourites to whom she gave her heart, and a husband for whom she kept her bed. As a Christian, she was at once a heretic and a bigot. She had one beauty, — the well-developed neck of a Niobe; the rest of her person was indifferently formed. She was a clumsy coquette, and a chaste one. Her skin was white and fine; she displayed a great deal of it. It was she who introduced the fashion of necklaces of large pearls clasped round the throat. She had a narrow forehead, sensual lips, fleshy cheeks, large eyes, short sight. Her short sight extended to her mind. Beyond a burst of merriment now and then, almost as ponderous as her anger, she lived in a sort of taciturn grumble and a grumbling silence. Words escaped from her which had to be guessed at. She was a mixture of a good woman and a mischievous devil. She liked surprises, which is extremely woman-like. She drank. She had fits of rage; she was violent, a brawler. Anne was a pattern, roughly

sketched, of the universal Eve. Her husband was a Dane, thoroughbred.

A Tory, Anne governed through the Whigs. Nobody could have been more awkward than Anne in directing affairs of State. She let things happen as they would. Her entire policy was hare-brained. She excelled in bringing about great catastrophes from little causes. When a desire to rule seized her, she called it giving "a stir with the poker." She would say with an air of profound thought, "No peer can keep his hat on before the king except De Courcy, Baron Kingsale, an Irish peer." Or, "It would be an injustice if my husband were not to be Lord High Admiral, since my father was." And she made George of Denmark Lord Admiral of England and of all her Majesty's plantations. She was incessantly exhaling bad humour; she did not explain her thought, she exuded it. There was something of the Sphinx in this goose.

Anne rather liked rough fun, teasing, and practical jokes. Could she have made Apollo a hunchback, it would have delighted her; but she would have left him a god. Good-natured, her plan was to allow no one to despair, and yet to worry everybody. She often had a rough word in her mouth; a little more, and she would have sworn like Elizabeth. From time to time she would take from a pocket which she wore in her skirt a little round box of chased silver, on which was her portrait in profile, between the two letters Q. A.; she would open this box, and take from it on her finger a little pomade, with which she reddened her lips; and having coloured her mouth, she would laugh. She was greedily fond of the flat Zealand ginger-bread cakes; she was proud of being fat.

More of a Puritan than anything else, Anne would nevertheless have liked to devote herself to stage plays

She had an absurd academy of music, copied after that of France. In 1700, a Frenchman named Forteroche wanted to build a royal circus at Paris, at a cost of four hundred thousand francs, which scheme was opposed by D'Argenson. This Forteroche went over to England, and proposed to Queen Anne to build in London a theatre finer than that of the King of France, — with which idea the queen was immediately charmed. Like Louis XIV., she liked to be driven at a gallop. Her teams and relays would sometimes do the distance between London and Windsor in less than an hour and a quarter.

II.

In Anne's time, no meeting was allowed without the permission of two justices of the peace. The convening of twelve persons, even if it were only to eat oysters and drink porter, was a felony. Under her reign, comparatively mild in other respects, impressing for the navy was carried on with extreme violence, — a gloomy evidence that the Englishman is a subject rather than a citizen. For centuries England suffered under this kind of tyranny, which gave the lie to all the old charters of liberty, and which France considered a good cause for triumph and indignation. What in some degree diminishes the triumph is, that while sailors were being impressed in England, soldiers were being impressed in France. In every great town of France, any able-bodied man, going through the streets about his business, was liable to be shoved by the crimps into a house called "the oven." There he was shut up with others in the same plight; those fit for service were picked out, and the recruiters sold them to the officers. In 1695 there were thirty of these "ovens" in Paris.

The laws against Ireland, emanating from Queen Anne, were atrocious. Anne was born in 1664, two years before the great fire in London, and the astrologers (there were some left; witness Louis XIV., who was born with the assistance of an astrologer, and swaddled in a horoscope) predicted that being the elder sister of fire she would be queen. And so she was, thanks to astrology and the revolution of 1688. She had the humiliation of having only Gilbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, for god-father. To be the god-child of the Pope was no longer possible in England; a mere primate is but a poor sort of god-father. Anne had to put up with it, however. It was her own fault; why was she a Protestant?

Denmark had paid for Anne's virginity (*virginitas empta*, as the old charters expressed it) by a dowry of £6,250 a year, secured on the bailiwick of Wardinburg and the island of Fehmarn. She followed, without conviction and by routine, the traditions of William. The English under this *régime* born of a revolution enjoyed as much liberty as they could lay hands on between the Tower of London, in which the orators were incarcerated, and the pillory, in which the writers were placed. Anne spoke a little Danish in her private chats with her husband, and a little French in her private chats with Bolingbroke. Wretched gibberish; but the height of English fashion, especially at court, was to talk French. There was never a *bon mot* but in French. Anne paid a deal of attention to the coinage of the realm, especially to the copper coins, which are the common and popular ones; she wanted to cut a great figure on them. Six different farthings were struck during her reign. On the back of the first three she had merely a throne struck; on the back of the fourth she ordered a triumphal chariot; and on the back of the

sixth a goddess holding a sword in one hand and an olive branch in the other, with the scroll, *Bello et pace.* Her father, James II. was blunt and cruel; she was brutal. At the same time she was really mild *au fond,* — a contradiction which only appears such. A fit of anger metamorphosed her. Heat sugar, and it will boil.

Anne was popular. England likes female rulers. France excludes them. Why? One reason is apparent at once; perhaps there is really no other. With English historians Elizabeth embodies grandeur; Anne, good-nature. As they will; be it so. But there is nothing delicate in the reigns of these women. The lines are heavy. It is gross grandeur and gross good-nature. As to their immaculate virtue, England is tenacious of it, and we are not going to oppose the idea. Elizabeth was a virgin tempered by Essex; Anne, a wife complicated by Bolingbroke.

III.

One idiotic habit of the people is to attribute to the king what they do themselves. They fight: whose is the glory? The king's. They pay: whose is the generosity? The king's. Then the people love him for being so rich. The king receives a crown from the poor, and gives them back a farthing. How generous he is! The colossus which is really only the pedestal contemplates the pygmy which is really the statue. How great this myrmidon is! He is on my back. A dwarf has an excellent way of making himself taller than a giant: it is to perch himself on his shoulders. But that the giant should allow it, there is the wonder; and that he should admire the height of the dwarf, there is the folly. Ah, the simplicity of mankind!

The equestrian statue, reserved for kings alone, is an excellent figure of royalty: the horse is the people. Only, the horse becomes transfigured by degrees. It begins as an ass; it ends as a lion. Then it throws its rider; and you have 1642 in England and 1789 in France. Sometimes it devours him; and you have 1649 in England, and 1793 in France. That the lion should relapse into the donkey is astonishing; but it is so. This was occurring in England. It had resumed the pack-saddle; namely, idolatry of the crown.

Queen Anne, as we have just observed, was popular. What was she doing to make herself so? Nothing. Nothing! — that is all that is asked of the sovereign of England. He receives for that nothing £1,250,000 a year. In 1705, England, which had had but thirteen men-of-war under Elizabeth and thirty-six under James I., counted a hundred and fifty in her fleet. The English had three armies, — five thousand men in Catalonia, ten thousand in Portugal, fifty thousand in Flanders; and besides, was paying £1,666,666 a year to monarchical and diplomatic Europe, — a sort of prostitute which the English people has always had in keeping. Parliament having voted a patriotic loan of thirty-four million francs of annuities, there had been a rush to the exchequer to subscribe it. England was sending a squadron to the East Indies, and a squadron to the West of Spain under Admiral Leake, without mentioning the reserve of four hundred sail under Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel. England had lately annexed Scotland. It was the interval between Hochstadt and Ramillies, and the first of these victories was foretelling the second. England, in its cast of the net at Hochstadt, had made prisoners of twenty-seven battalions and four regiments of dragoons, and deprived France of one hundred leagues of country, — France, who was drawing back dismayed

from the Danube to the Rhine. England was stretching out her hand towards Sardinia and the Balearic Islands; she was bringing into her ports in triumph ten Spanish line-of-battle ships, and many a galleon laden with gold. Hudson's Bay and Straits were already partially relinquished by Louis XIV. It was believed that he was about to give up his hold on Acadia, St. Christopher's, and Newfoundland; and that he would be only too happy if England would but allow the King of France to catch a few cod off Cape Breton. England was about to inflict upon him the mortification of compelling him to demolish the fortifications of Dunkirk. Meanwhile, she had taken Gibraltar, and was taking Barcelona. What great things accomplished! How was it possible to refuse Anne admiration for taking the trouble of living at the period?

From a certain point of view, the reign of Anne seems to be a reflection of the reign of Louis XIV. In that great race called "history," Queen Anne certainly bears some resemblance to the French monarch. Like him, she played at a great reign; she had her monuments, her arts, her victories, her captains, her men of letters, her privy purse to pension celebrities, her gallery of *chefs-d'œuvre*, side by side with those of his Majesty. Her court, too, was a *cortége*, with the features of a triumph, an order, and a march. It was a miniature copy of all the great men of Versailles, who were not giants themselves. In it there is enough to deceive the eye; add "God save the Queen," which might have been taken from Lulli, and the *ensemble* becomes an illusion. Not a personage is missing. Christopher Wren is a very passable Mansard; Somers is as good as Lamoignon; Anne has a Racine in Dryden, a Boileau in Pope, a Colbert in Godolphin, a Louvois in Pembroke, and a Turenne in Marlborough. Heighten the wigs and lower the

foreheads: the whole effect is solemn and pompous, and the Windsor of the time bears a faded resemblance to Marly. Still, the whole was effeminate, and Anne's Père Tellier was called Sarah Jennings. However, there is an outline of incipient irony, which fifty years later was to turn to philosophy, in the literature of the age; and the Protestant Tartuffe is unmasked by Swift just in the same way as the Catholic Tartuffe is denounced by Molière. Although the England of that period quarrels and fights with France, she imitates her and draws enlightenment from her; and the light on the façade of England is French light. It is a pity that Anne's reign lasted but twelve years, or the English would not hesitate to call it the century of Anne, — as we say the century of Louis XIV. Anne appeared in 1702, as Louis XIV. declined. It is one of the curiosities of history that the rise of this pale planet coincides with the setting of the purple planet, and that at the very time France had the Sun king England should have had the Moon queen.

One fact is well worthy of note. Louis XIV., although they waged war upon him, was greatly admired in England. "He is just the kind of a king they need in France," said the English. The love of the English for their own liberty is mingled with a certain acceptance of servitude for others. Their favourable opinion of the chains which bind their neighbours sometimes amounts to enthusiasm for the despot next door.

To sum up, Anne rendered her people *hureux*, as the French translator of Beeverell's book repeats three times, with graceful reiteration, in the sixth and ninth page of his dedication and the third of his preface.

IV.

Queen Anne bore the Duchess Josiana a slight grudge, — for two reasons. Firstly, because she thought the Duchess Josiana handsome. Secondly, because she thought the Duchess Josiana's betrothed handsome. Two reasons for jealousy are sufficient for a woman; one is sufficient for a queen. Let us add that she bore her a grudge for being her sister.

Anne did not like women to be pretty. She considered it contrary to good morals. As for herself, she was ugly, — not from choice, however. She derived a part of her religion from that ugliness. Josiana, beautiful and philosophical, was a cause of vexation to the queen. A pretty duchess is not a desirable sister to an ugly queen.

There was another grievance, — Josiana's "improper" birth.

Anne was the daughter of Anne Hyde, a simple gentlewoman, lawfully but vexatiously married by James II. when Duke of York. Anne, having this inferior blood in her veins, felt herself but half royal; and Josiana, having come into the world irregularly, drew closer attention to the incorrectness, less great, but really existing, in the birth of the queen. The daughter of a *mésalliance* disliked to see the daughter of bastardy so near her. It was an unpleasant reminder. Josiana had a right to say to Anne, "My mother was at least as good as yours." Of course at court no one said so, but they evidently thought it. This was a bore for her Royal Majesty. Why did this Josiana exist? What had put it into her head to be born? What good was a Josiana? Some relationships are detrimental.

Nevertheless, Anne smiled on Josiana. Perhaps she might even have liked her, had she not been her sister.

CHAPTER VI.

BARKILPHEDRO.

IT is well to know what people are doing, and a certain surveillance is wise.

Josiana had Lord David watched by a creature of hers, whom she thought she could trust, and whose name was Barkilphedro. Lord David had Josiana secretly watched by a creature of his, of whom he felt sure, and whose name was Barkilphedro. Queen Anne, for her part, kept herself secretly informed of the actions and conduct of the Duchess Josiana her bastard sister, and of Lord David her future brother-in-law (on the left hand), by a creature of hers whom she trusted implicitly, and whose name was Barkilphedro.

Barkilphedro had not always held the magnificent position of whisperer into three ears. He was an old servant of the Duke of York. He had tried to be a clergyman, but had failed. The Duke of York, an English and Roman prince, compounded of royal Popery and legal Anglicanism, had his Catholic household and his Protestant household, and might have pushed Barkilphedro in one or the other hierarchy; but he did not judge him to be Catholic enough to make him almoner, or Protestant enough to make him chaplain, — so that between two religions Barkilphedro found himself with his soul on the ground. Not a bad posture, either, for certain reptile souls; and some roads are impracticable, so that one must crawl flat on one's belly.

An obscure but fattening servitude had long made up Barkilphedro's existence. Service is something; but he wanted power besides. He was, perhaps, about to attain it when James II. fell; then he had to begin all over again. There was no chance for him under William III., a sullen prince, exercising in his mode of reigning a prudery which he believed to be probity. Barkilphedro, when his protector James II. was dethroned, did not lapse at once into rags. There is a something which survives deposed princes, and which feeds and sustains their parasites. The remains of the exhaustible sap causes leaves to live on for two or three days on the branches of the uprooted tree; then, all at once, the leaf yellows and dries up: and thus it is with the courtier. Thanks to that embalming process which is called legitimacy, the prince himself, although fallen and cast away, is preserved; it is not so with the courtier, who is much more dead than the king. The king over yonder is a mummy; the courtier here is a phantom. To be the shadow of a shadow is leanness indeed. Hence Barkilphedro became famished; then he took up the character of a man of letters. But he was thrust out even from the kitchens. Sometimes he knew not where to sleep. "Who will give me shelter?" he would ask. He struggled on. All that is interesting in patience in distress he possessed. He had, besides, the talent of the termite, — knowing how to bore a hole from the bottom to the top. By dint of making use of the name of James II., of old memories, of anecdotes of fidelity, and of touching stories, he pierced the Duchess Josiana's heart.

Josiana took a liking to this man of poverty and wit, — an interesting combination. She introduced him to Lord Dirry-Moir, gave him a shelter in the servants' hall among her domestics, retained him in her house-

hold, was kind to him, and sometimes even spoke to him. Barkilphedro knew neither hunger nor cold again. Josiana addressed him in the second person; it was the fashion for great ladies to do so to men of letters, who allowed it. The Marquise de Mailly received Roy, whom she had never seen before, in bed, and said to him: "C'est toi qui as fait l'Année galante! Bonjour." Later on, the men of letters returned the custom. The day came when Fabre d'Eglantine said to the Duchesse de Rohan: "N'est-tu pas la Chabot?"

For Barkilphedro to be "thee'd" and "thou'd" was a triumph; he was overjoyed by it. He had aspired to this contemptuous familiarity. "Lady Josiana thees-and-thous me," he would say to himself; and he would rub his hands. He profited by this theeing-and-thouing to make further progress. He became a constant attendant in Josiana's private rooms, — in no way troublesome, unnoticed; in fact, the duchess would almost have changed her shift before him. All this, however, was precarious. Barkilphedro was aiming at an assured position. A duchess is only a half-way house; an underground passage which did not lead to the queen was not worth boring.

One day Barkilphedro said to Josiana: "Would your Grace like to make my fortune?"

"What dost thou want?"

"An appointment."

"An appointment, — for thee?"

"Yes, madam."

"What an idea! — *thou* to ask for an appointment! thou, who art good for nothing."

"That 's just the reason."

Josiana burst out laughing. "Among the offices to which thou art unsuited, which dost thou desire?"

"That of cork-drawer of the bottles of the ocean."

Josiana's laughter redoubled. "What meanest thou? Thou art jesting."

"No, madam."

"To amuse myself, I shall answer you seriously," said the duchess. "What dost thou wish to be? Repeat it."

"Uncorker of the bottles of the ocean."

"Everything is possible at court. Is there an appointment of that kind?"

"Yes, madam."

"That is news to me. Go on."

"There is such an appointment, however."

"Swear it by the soul which thou dost not possess."

"I swear it."

"I do not believe thee."

"Thank you, madam."

"Then thou wishest — Say it again."

"To uncork the bottles of the ocean."

"That is a situation which can give you very little trouble. It is like grooming a bronze horse."

"Very nearly."

"Nothing to do. Well, 't is a situation that would suit thee. Thou art just about equal to it, I should judge."

"You see I am good for something."

"Come! thou art talking nonsense. Is there such an appointment?"

Barkilphedro assumed an attitude of deferential gravity: "Madam, you had an august father, James II. the king, and you have an illustrious brother-in-law, George of Denmark, Duke of Cumberland; your father was, and your brother is, Lord High Admiral of England —"

"Is what thou tellest me any news? I know all that as well as thou?"

"But here is something your Grace does not know.

In the sea there are three kinds of things, — those at the bottom, *lagan;* those which float, *flotsam;* those which the sea casts up on the shore, *jetsam.*"

"And then?"

"These three things — *lagan*, *flotsam*, and *jetsam* — belong to the Lord High Admiral."

"And then?"

"Your Grace understands."

"No."

"All that is in the sea, all that sinks, all that floats, all that is cast ashore, — all belongs to the Admiral of England."

"Everything! Really? And then?"

"Except the sturgeon, which belongs to the king."

"I should have thought," said Josiana, "that everything would have belonged to Neptune."

"Neptune is a fool. He has given up everything. He has allowed the English to take everything."

"Finish what thou wert saying."

"'Prizes of the sea' is the name given to such *treasure trove.*"

"Be it so."

"It is boundless. There is always something floating, something being cast up. It is the contribution of the sea, — the tax which the ocean pays to England."

"With all my heart. But pray conclude."

"Your Grace understands that in this way the ocean creates a department."

"Where?"

"At the Admiralty."

"What department?"

"The Sea-Prize Department."

"Well?"

"The department is subdivided into three offices, — Lagan, Flotsam, and Jetsam; and there is an officer in each."

"And then?"

"A ship at sea writes to give notice on any subject to those on land, — that it is sailing in such a latitude, that it has met a sea-monster, that it is in sight of shore, that it is in distress, that it is about to founder, that it is lost, etc. The captain takes a bottle, puts into it a bit of paper on which he has written the information, corks up the flask, and casts it into the sea. If the bottle goes to the bottom, it is in the department of the lagan officer; if it floats, it is in the department of the flotsam officer; if it be cast up on shore, it concerns the jetsam officer."

"And wouldst thou like to be the jetsam officer?"

"Precisely so."

"And that is what thou callest uncorking the bottles of the ocean?"

"Since there is such an appointment."

"Why dost thou wish for the last-named place in preference to both the others?"

"Because it is vacant just now."

"In what does the appointment consist?"

"Madam, in 1598 a tarred bottle, picked up by a man conger-fishing on the strand of Epidium Promontorium, was brought to Queen Elizabeth; and a parchment drawn out of it gave information to England that Holland had taken, without saying anything about it, an unknown country, Nova Zembla; that the capture had taken place in June, 1596; that in that country people were eaten by bears; and that the manner of passing the winter was described on a paper enclosed in a musket-case hanging in the chimney of the wooden house built in the island and left by the Dutchmen, who were all dead; and that the chimney was built of a barrel with the end knocked out, sunk into the roof."

"I don't understand much of thy rigmarole."

"Be it so. Elizabeth understood. A country the more for Holland was a country the less for England The bottle which had given the information was considered of importance; and thenceforward an order was issued that anybody who should find a sealed bottle on the sea-shore should take it to the Lord High Admiral of England, under penalty of the gallows. The Admiral intrusts the opening of such bottles to an officer, who presents the contents to the Queen, if there be any reason for so doing."

"Are many such bottles brought to the Admiralty?"

"But few. But it 's all the same. The appointment exists. There is a room and lodgings at the Admiralty for the official."

"And what is one paid for this kind of doing nothing?"

"One hundred guineas a year."

"And thou wouldst trouble me for that much?"

"It is enough to live upon."

"Like a beggar."

"As becomes one of my sort."

"One hundred guineas! It 's a bagatelle."

"What keeps you for a minute keeps us for a year. That 's the advantage of being poor."

"Thou shalt have the place."

A week afterwards, thanks to Josiana's exertions and to the influence of Lord David Dirry-Moir, Barkilphedro was installed at the Admiralty, — safe thenceforward, drawn out of his precarious existence, lodged, and boarded, with a salary of a hundred guineas.

CHAPTER VII.

BARKILPHEDRO GNAWS HIS WAY.

THERE is one essential thing, — that is to be ungrateful. Barkilphedro did not fail in this particular. Having received so many benefits from Josiana, he had naturally but one thought, — to revenge himself upon her. When we add that Josiana was beautiful, great, young, rich, powerful, and illustrious, while Barkilphedro was ugly, little, old, poor, dependent, obscure, — he must necessarily revenge himself for all this as well. When a man is made of darkness, how can he forgive so many beams of light?

Barkilphedro was an Irishman who had denied Ireland, — a bad type. Barkilphedro had but one thing in his favour, — that he had a very big belly. A big belly passes for a sign of kind-heartedness; but this belly was only an addition to Barkilphedro's hypocrisy, for the man was full of malice.

What was Barkilphedro's age? Any age whatever; that is to say, the age necessary for the project of the moment. He was old in his wrinkles and grey hairs, young in the activity of his mind; he was at once active and ponderous, — a sort of hippopotamus-monkey. A royalist, certainly; a republican, — who knows? A Catholic, perhaps; a Protestant, without doubt. For Stuart, probably; for Brunswick, evidently. To be For is a power only on condition of being at the same time Against. Barkilphedro practised this wisdom.

The appointment of drawer of the bottles of the ocean was not as absurd as Barkilphedro had appeared to make out. The complaints (which would in these times be termed denunciations) of Garcia Fernandez, in his "Followers of the Sea," against the stealing of jetsam, called right of wreck, and against the pillaging of wreck by the inhabitants of the sea-coast, had created a sensation in England, and had secured for the shipwrecked this reform, — that their goods, chattels, and property, instead of being stolen by the country-people, were confiscated by the Lord High Admiral. All the *débris* of the sea cast upon the English shore (merchandise, broken hulls of ships, bales, chests, etc.) belonged to the Lord High Admiral; but — and here was revealed the importance of the place solicited by Barkilphedro — the floating receptacles containing messages and information received particular attention at the Admiralty. Shipwrecks excite England's deep solicitude. Navigation being her chief occupation, shipwrecks are one of her greatest causes of anxiety. England is kept in a state of perpetual anxiety by the sea. The little glass bottle cast into the waves from the doomed ship contains intelligence precious from every point of view, — intelligence concerning the ship; intelligence concerning the crew; intelligence concerning the place, the time, the manner of shipwreck; intelligence concerning the winds which broke up the vessel; intelligence concerning the currents which bore the floating flask ashore. The office filled by Barkilphedro has been abolished more than a century, but it had its utility. The last holder was William Hussey, of Doddington in Lincolnshire. The man who held it was a sort of guardian of the sea. All the closed and sealed vessels, bottles, flasks, jars, cast upon the English coast by the tide, were brought to him. He alone had the right to open them; he was the first to

learn the secrets they contained; he put them in order, and ticketed them with his signature. The expression "loger un papier au greffe," still used in the Channel Islands, is thence derived. However, one precaution was certainly taken. Not one of these bottles could be unsealed except in the presence of two examiners of the Admiralty office who were sworn to secrecy, and who signed, conjointly with the holder of the jetsam office, the official report of the opening. But these officials being pledged to secrecy, Barkilphedro was invested with considerable discretionary power. It depended upon him, to a certain extent, to suppress a fact or bring it to light.

These frail floating messages were far from being as rare and insignificant as Barkilphedro had asserted. Some reached land with very little delay; others, after many years. It depended on the winds and the currents. The fashion of casting bottles into the sea is rather out of date now, like that of thank offerings; but in those religious times, those who were about to die were glad thus to despatch their last thoughts to God and men, and at times these messages from the sea were plentiful at the Admiralty. A parchment preserved in the hall at Audlyene (ancient spelling), with notes by the Earl of Suffolk, Grand Treasurer of England under James I., bears witness that in the one year 1615 fifty-two flasks, bladders, and tarred vessels, containing mention of sinking ships, were brought and registered in the records of the Lord High Admiral.

Court appointments are the drop of oil in the widow's cruse, they are ever on the increase. Thus it is that the porter has become chancellor, and the groom constable. The special officer charged with the appointment desired and obtained by Barkilphedro was usually a confidential man; Elizabeth had wished that it should be so. At court, to speak of confidence is to speak of

intrigue; and to speak of intrigue is to speak of advancement. This functionary had come to be a personage of some consideration. He was a clerk, and ranked directly after the two grooms of the almonry. He had the right of entrance into the palace, — at least, what was called the humble entrance (*humilis introïtus*), — and even into the bedchamber; for it was the custom that he should inform the monarch, on occasions of importance, of the objects found, which were often very curious, — the wills of men in despair, farewells to fatherland, revelations of falsified logs, bills of lading, crimes committed at sea, legacies to the crown, etc., — and should account from time to time to the king or queen concerning the opening of these ill-omened bottles. It was the Black Cabinet of the ocean. Elizabeth, who was always glad of an opportunity to speak Latin, used to ask Tonfield, of Coley in Berkshire, jetsam officer in her reign, when he brought her one of these papers cast up by the sea: "Quid mihi scribit Neptunus?"

The way had been eaten, the insect had succeeded. Barkilphedro had at last reached the queen. This was all he wanted. Was it in order that he might make his fortune? No. It was to destroy that of others. A much greater satisfaction. To destroy affords some persons unspeakable delight. To be imbued with a vague but implacable desire to destroy, and never to lose sight of that desire, is not a characteristic of every one; but Barkilphedro possessed this fixity of purpose in an eminent degree. He clung to his resolve with all the tenacity of a bull-dog. To feel himself inexorable afforded him no end of grim satisfaction. So long as he had a victim in his clutches, or a certainty of injuring him in his soul, he asked nothing more. He shivered content if he knew that his neighbour was suffering with the cold.

Catesby, the colleague of Guy Fawkes, in the Popish powder plot, said: "I would n't miss seeing Parliament blown upside down for a million sterling." Barkilphedro was that meanest and most terrible of things, — an envious man. There is always room for envy at court. Courts abound in impertinent people, in idlers, in rich loungers hungering for gossip; in those who seek for needles in haystacks; in triflers, in banterers bantered; in witty ninnies, who cannot do without converse with an envious man. What a refreshing thing the evil you hear about others is! Envy is good stuff to make a spy of. There is a profound analogy between that natural passion envy and that social function espionage. The spy hunts on some other person's account, like the dog; the envious man hunts on his own account like the cat. The envious man is generally a fierce man; but Barkilphedro was singularly cautious and reserved. He guarded his secret well, and racked himself with his hate. Enormous baseness implies enormous vanity. He was liked by those whom he amused, and hated by all others; but he felt that he was scorned by those who hated him, and despised even by those who liked him. He restrained himself; all his gall simmered noiselessly. He was a silent prey of the Furies. He had a talent for swallowing everything. Paroxysms of internal rage convulsed him, fierce fires smouldered unseen in his breast. He was a *smoke-consuming* man of passion. The surface was serene. He was kind, prompt, easy, amiable, obliging. Never mind to whom, never mind where, he bowed with every breath of wind; he bowed to the earth. What a source of fortune to have such a reed for a spine!

Such crafty and venomous beings are not so rare as is believed. We live surrounded by ill-natured, crawling things. Why are such malevolent creatures allowed to

exist? A natural question! The dreamer continually puts it to himself, and the thinker never solves it. Hence the sad eye of the philosophers ever fixed upon that mountain of darkness which is destiny, and from the top of which the colossal spectre of evil casts handfuls of serpents over the earth.

Barkilphedro's body was obese, and his face lean, — a broad chest and a bony countenance. His nails were grooved and short, his fingers knotty, his thumbs flat, his hair coarse, his temples wide apart; and his broad, low forehead was that of a murderer. His small eyes were nearly hidden by his bushy eyebrows. His long, sharp, and flabby nose nearly met his mouth. Barkilphedro, properly attired as an emperor, would have certainly resembled Domitian. His muddy, sallow face might have been modelled in slimy paste; his immovable cheeks were like putty; he had all kinds of ugly wrinkles; the angle of his jaw was massive, his chin heavy, his ears coarse. In repose, and seen in profile, his upper lip was raised at an acute angle, showing two teeth. Those teeth seemed to glare at you; for the teeth can glare, just as the eye can bite. Patience, temperance, continence, reserve, self-control, amenity, deference, gentleness, politeness, sobriety, chastity, completed and finished Barkilphedro; but he degraded these virtues by possessing them.

In a short time Barkilphedro gained a firm foothold at court.

CHAPTER VIII.

INFERI.

THERE are two ways of gaining a foothold at court, — in the clouds, and one is august; in the mud, and one is powerful. In the first case, you belong on Olympus. In the second case, you belong in the private closet. He who belongs on Olympus has but the thunderbolt to serve him; he who is in the private closet has the police at his command.

The private closet contains all the instruments of government, and sometimes (for it is a traitor) its chastisements as well. Generally it is less tragic. It is there that Alberoni admires Vendôme. Royal personages willingly make it their place of audience; it takes the place of the throne. Louis XIV. receives the Duchess of Burgundy there; Philip V. is shoulder to shoulder there with the queen. The priest penetrates into it. The private closet is sometimes a branch of the confessional; therefore it is that at court there are underground fortunes, — not always the least. If under Louis XI. you would be great, be Pierre de Rohan, Marshal of France; if you would be influential, be Olivier le Daim, the barber. If you would be glorious under Marie de Medicis, be Sillery, the Chancellor; if you would be a person of consideration, be Hannon, the maid. If you would be illustrious under Louis XV., be Choiseul, the minister; if you would be formidable, be

Lebel, the valet. Given Louis XIV., Bontemps who makes his bed is more powerful than Louvois who raises his armies, and Turenne who gains his victories. Take Père Joseph from Richelieu, and you have little left. There is mystery at least; his eminence in scarlet is magnificent, his eminence in grey is terrible. What power in being a worm! All the Narvaez combined with all the O'Donnells achieve less than one Sister Patrocinio. Of course, the condition of this power is littleness. If you would remain powerful, remain petty, — be nothing. The serpent in repose, twisted into a circle, is a figure at the same time of the infinite and of naught.

One of these ignoble opportunities had fallen to Barkilphedro. He had crawled where he wanted. Vermin can get in anywhere. Louis XIV. had bugs in his bed and Jesuits in his policy. There is no incompatibility in this. In this world, to gravitate is to oscillate. One pole is attracted to the other. Francis I. is attracted by Triboulet; Louis XV. is attracted by Lebel. There exists a deep affinity between extreme elevation and extreme debasement. It is the scullion who directs; nothing is easier of comprehension. It is the person below who pulls the string. No position could be more convenient. He is the eye, and he has the ear. He is the eye of the government; he has the ear of the king. To have the ear of the king is to draw and shut at will the bolt of the royal conscience, and to throw into that conscience whatever one wishes. The mind of a king is your cupboard; if you are a rag-picker, it is your basket. The ears of kings are not their own; consequently the poor devils are not altogether responsible for their actions. He who is not master of his own thoughts is not accountable for his own deeds.

A king obeys — what? Any evil spirit buzzing from

outside in his ear; a noisome fly of the slums. This buzzing rules him. A reign is a dictation: the loud voice is the sovereign; the muffled voice is the sovereignty. Those who know how to distinguish this muffled voice in a reign, and to hear its whispers, are the real historians.

CHAPTER IX.

HATE IS AS STRONG AS LOVE.

QUEEN ANNE had several of these ignoble advisers around her. Barkilphedro was one. He also secretly worked, influenced, and plotted upon Lady Josiana and Lord David. As we have said, he whispered in three ears,—one more than Dangeau. Dangeau whispered in but two, in the days when, thrusting himself between Louis XIV., who was in love with Henrietta his sister-in-law, and Henrietta, who was in love with Louis XIV. her brother-in-law, he as Louis's secretary, without the knowledge of Henrietta, and as Henrietta's without the knowledge of Louis, wrote the questions and answers of both the love-making marionettes.

Barkilphedro was so cheerful, so compliant, so incapable of espousing the cause of any one, so ugly, so mischievous, that it was quite natural that a regal personage should soon be unable to do without him. Once Anne had tried Barkilphedro, she would have no other flatterer. He flattered her as they flattered Louis the Great, by disparaging her neighbours. "The king being ignorant," says Madame de Montchevreuil, "one is obliged to sneer at the savants." To poison the sting, from time to time, is the acme of art. Nero loves to see Locusta at work.

Royal palaces are very easily entered; a pretext suffices. Barkilphedro, having found this pretext, his position with the queen soon became the same as that with the

Duchess Josiana, — that of an indispensable domestic animal. A witticism ventured one day immediately led to a perfect understanding of the queen's character, and a correct estimate of her kindness of heart. The queen was greatly attached to her Lord Steward, William Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, who was very stupid. This lord, who had obtained every Oxford degree and yet did not know how to spell, one fine morning committed the folly of dying. To die is a very imprudent thing at court, for then there is no further restraint in speaking of you. The queen, in the presence of Barkilphedro, lamented the event, finally exclaiming, with a sigh:

"It is a pity that so many virtues should have been borne and served by so poor an intellect."

"Dieu veuille avoir son âne!" whispered Barkilphedro, in a low voice, and in French.

The queen smiled. Barkilphedro noted the smile, and concluded that biting pleased her. Free license had been given to his spite. From that day he thrust his curiosity everywhere, and his malignity with it. No one ventured to oppose him, so greatly was he feared. He who can make the king laugh makes all the others tremble. He was a cunning rascal. Every day he worked his way forward — underground. Barkilphedro became a necessity; and many great persons honoured him with their confidence, to the extent of intrusting him with their disgraceful commissions. There are wheels within wheels at court. Barkilphedro became the motive power. Have you ever noticed, in certain mechanisms, the smallness of the motive wheel?

Josiana, in particular, who, as we have explained, made use of Barkilphedro's talents as a spy, trusted him so implicitly that she had not hesitated to intrust him with a pass-key, by means of which he was able to enter her apartments at any hour. This excessive license of

insight into private life was in fashion in the seventeenth century; it was called "giving the key." Josiana had given two of these confidential keys; Lord David had one, Barkilphedro the other. However, to enter straight into a bedchamber was in the old code of manners a thing not in the least out of the way. Thence resulted startling incidents. La Ferté, suddenly drawing back the bed-curtains of Mademoiselle Lafont, found inside Sainson of the Black Musketeers.

Barkilphedro excelled in making those cunning discoveries which place the great in the power of the humble. Like every perfect spy, the cruelty of the executioner and the patience of a micograph entered largely into his composition. He was a born courtier. Every courtier is a noctambulist. The courtier prowls about in the night with a dark-lantern in his hand. He lights up the spot he wishes, and remains in darkness himself. What he is seeking with his lantern is not a man, it is a fool. What he finds is the king. Kings do not like to see those about them aspire. Irony aimed at any one except themselves has a charm for them. The talent of Barkilphedro consisted in a perpetual dwarfing of the peers and princes to the advantage of her Majesty's stature, thereby increased proportionately.

The pass-key held by Barkilphedro was made with a different set of wards at each end, so as to open the private apartments in both Josiana's favourite residences, — Hunkerville House in London, and Corleone Lodge at Windsor. These two houses were part of the Clancharlie inheritance. Hunkerville House was close to Oldgate. Oldgate was a gate of London, which was entered by the Harwich road, and on which was displayed a statue of Charles II., with a painted angel above his head, and a carved lion and unicorn beneath his feet. From Hunkerville House, in an easterly wind,

you could hear the bells of St. Marylebone. Corleone Lodge was a Florentine palace of brick and stone, with a marble colonnade, built on pilework, at Windsor, near the head of the wooden bridge, and having one of the finest courts in England. In this last palace, near Windsor Castle, Josiana was within the queen's reach. Nevertheless, Josiana liked it.

Barkilphedro's influence over the queen, though apparently so insignificant, was deeply rooted. To exterminate these noxious weeds from a court is extremely difficult, for though they have taken a deep root, they offer no hold above the surface. To root out a Roquelaure, a Triboulet, or a Brummel, is almost impossible.

From day to day, and more and more, did the queen take Barkilphedro into her good graces. Sarah Jennings is famous; Barkilphedro is unknown,—his existence remains ignored; the name of Barkilphedro has not reached as far as history. All the moles are not caught by the mole-trapper. Barkilphedro, having once been a candidate for orders, had studied a little of everything. Skimming all things results in naught. One may be a victim of the *omnis res scibilis*. Having the vessel of the Danaïdes in one's head is the misfortune of a legion of learned men, who may be termed the sterile. What Barkilphedro had put into his brain had left it empty.

The mind, like Nature, abhors a vacuum. Into emptiness, where Nature puts love, the mind often puts hate. There is such a thing as hating merely for the sake of hating. A man hates because he must do something. Gratuitous hatred,—what a strange expression! It means hate which is in itself its own reward. The bear lives by licking his claws,—not indefinitely, of course; the claws must be revictualled,—something must be put into them. A hatred of mankind in general is sweet, and suffices for a time; but one must eventually have a

definite object. An animosity diffused over all creation is exhausting, like every solitary pleasure. Hate without an object is like a shooting-match without a target; what lends interest to the game is a heart to be pierced. One cannot hate solely for the honour of it; some seasoning is necessary,—a man, a woman, somebody, to destroy.

This service of making the game interesting, of offering an aim, of adding a zest to hatred by fixing it on an object, of amusing the hunter by the sight of his living prey, of giving the watcher the hope of the smoking and boiling blood about to flow, of amusing the bird-catcher by the credulity of the uselessly winged lark, of being a victim unwittingly reared for murder by a master-mind,—all this exquisite and horrible service, of which the person rendering it is unconscious, Josiana rendered Barkilphedro. Thought is a projectile. Barkilphedro had, from the very first, aimed at Josiana the evil intentions which were in his mind. An intention and a carbine are alike. Barkilphedro aimed at Josiana, directing all his secret malice against the duchess. That astonishes you! What has the bird done at which you fire? You want to eat it, you say; and so it was with Barkilphedro.

Josiana could not be wounded in the heart; the spot where that enigma lies is hard to wound. But she could be wounded in the head; that is, in her pride. It was there that she deemed herself strong, and that she was really very weak. Barkilphedro had found this out. If Josiana had been able to read his mind clearly, if she had been able to distinguish what lay in ambush behind his smile, that proud woman would have trembled. Fortunately for the tranquillity of her sleep, she was in complete ignorance of the man's real character.

The unforeseen lurks one knows not where. There is no such thing as petty hatred; hatred is always dangerous, even in the smallest creature. An elephant hated by even an ant is in danger.

Barkilphedro did not know as yet what he was going to do to Josiana; but he had made up his mind to do something. To have come to this decision was a great step taken. To crush Josiana utterly would have been too great a triumph. He could not hope for that; but to humiliate her, wound her, bring her to grief, redden her proud eyes with tears of rage,—what happiness! He counted on it. Tenacious, diligent, faithful to the torment of his neighbour, not to be moved from his purpose,—Nature had not formed him for nothing. He understood how to find the flaw in Josiana's golden armour, and how to make the blood of this goddess flow.

What benefit, we ask again, would accrue to him in so doing? An immense benefit,—doing evil to one who had done good to him. What is an envious man? An ungrateful one. He hates the sun that lights and warms him. Zoilus hated that benefactor of mankind, Homer. To inflict on Josiana what would nowadays be called vivisection; to have her, all convulsed, on his anatomical table; to dissect her alive, at his leisure, in some surgery; to cut her up, bit by bit, while she shrieked with agony,—this dream delighted Barkilphedro! To arrive at this result it was necessary to suffer some himself; he did so willingly. We may pinch ourselves with our own pincers; the knife as it shuts cuts our fingers,—what does that matter? That he should partake of Josiana's torture was a matter of little moment. The executioner handling the red-hot iron, when about to brand a prisoner, does not mind a little burn. As another suffers so much, he suffers

nothing. To see the victim's writhings makes the inflicter forget his own pain. Destroy, by all means, come what may!

To plot evil against others is mingled with an acceptance of some responsibility. We risk ourselves in the danger which we are bringing upon another, because the chain of events sometimes, of course, brings unexpected accidents. This does not stop the really malicious man. His enjoyment is proportionate to the victim's agony. The malicious man delights only in the sufferings of others; pain reflects itself on him in a sense of welfare. The Duke of Alva used to warm his hands at the stake. The pile was torture, the reflection of it pleasure. That such feelings should be possible makes one shudder. Our dark side is unfathomable. *Supplice exquis*, — "exquisite torture" (the expression is in Bodin [1]), — has perhaps this terrible triple sense: search for the torture, suffering of the tortured, delight of the torturer. Ambition, appetite, — all such words signify some one sacrificed for some one's gratification. Can it be that the outpourings of our wishes flow naturally in the direction to which we most incline, that of evil? One of the hardest labours of the just man is to expunge malevolence from his soul. Almost all our desires, when closely examined, contain what we dare not avow. In the thoroughly wicked man this malevolence exists in hideous perfection. So much the worse for others signifies so much the better for himself. Oh, the deep depravity of the human heart!

Josiana, with that sense of security which results from ignorant pride, had a supreme contempt for all danger. The feminine power of disdain is extraordinary. Josiana's was unreasoning, involuntary, and confident. Barkilphedro was in her eyes so contemptible

[1] Book IV. p. 196.

that she would have been astonished had any one hinted at such a thing as danger from that source. So she went and came and laughed before this man who was watching her with evil eyes, biding his time.

In proportion as he waited, his determination to imbitter this woman's life augmented. In the mean time he gave himself excellent reasons for his determination. It must not be supposed that scoundrels are deficient in self-esteem; they enter into details with themselves in their lofty monologues, and they carry matters with a high hand. True, this Josiana had bestowed charity on him! She had thrown some crumbs of her enormous wealth to him, as to a beggar; she had nailed and riveted him to an office which was unworthy him. Yes; that he, Barkilphedro, almost a clergyman, of varied and profound talents, a learned man, with the material in him for a bishop, should have to spend his time registering nasty, patience-trying shards; that he should have to pass his life in the garret of a register-office, gravely uncorking stupid bottles incrusted with all the nastiness of the sea, deciphering musty parchments, dirty wills, and other illegible stuff of the kind, — was all the fault of this Josiana. Worst of all, this creature "thee'd" and "thou'd" him! And should he not revenge himself? Should he not punish such conduct? In that case, there would be no such thing as justice here below!

CHAPTER X.

THE FLAME WHICH WOULD BE SEEN IF MAN WERE TRANSPARENT.

WHAT! this woman; this extravagant thing; this libidinous dreamer; this bold creature under a princess's coronet; this Diana through pride, not yet captured merely because chance had so willed it; this illegitimate daughter of a low-lived king who had not the intellect to keep his place; this duchess by a lucky hit, who being a fine lady played the goddess, but who had she been poor would have been a prostitute, — this appropriator of a proscribed man's goods, this overbearing strumpet, because one day, he, Barkilphedro, had not money enough to buy his dinner, and to get a lodging, had had the impudence to seat him at the corner of a table in her house, and to put him up in some hole in her intolerable palace. Where? Never mind where; perhaps in the barn, perhaps in the cellar, what does it matter? — a little better than her valets, a little worse than her horses. She had taken advantage of his distress (his, Barkilphedro's) in hastening to do him a pretended favour, — a thing which the rich do in order to humiliate the poor, and attach them to their pretended benefactors like curs led by a string. Besides, what had the service she rendered him cost her? A service is worth what it costs, and no more. She had too many rooms in her house, so she came to Barkilphedro's aid! A great boon, indeed! Had she eaten a spoonful the less

of turtle soup for it? Had she deprived herself of any of her superfluous luxuries? No. She had only added another to them, — a good action like a ring on her finger, — the relief of a man of wit, the patronage of a clergyman. She could give herself airs; say, "I lavish kindness; I fill the mouths of men of letters; I am his benefactress. How lucky the wretch was to find me out! What a patroness of the arts I am!" All for having set up a truckle-bed in a wretched garret in the roof.

As for the place in the Admiralty which Barkilphedro owed to Josiana, — by Jove! a petty appointment that! Josiana had made Barkilphedro what he was! She had created him! Be it so. Created nothing, — less than nothing; for in his absurd situation he felt borne down, tongue-tied, disfigured. What did he owe Josiana? The thanks due from a hunchback to the mother who bore him deformed. Behold your privileged ones, your folks overwhelmed with fortune, your parvenus, your favourites of that horrid step-mother, Fortune! And here, Barkilphedro, a man of talent, was obliged to wait on staircases, to bow to footmen, to climb to the top of the house at night, to be courteous, assiduous, pleasant, respectful, and to have a respectful grimace ever on his face! Was it not enough to make him gnash his teeth with rage! And all the while she was putting pearls round her neck, and making amorous poses for that fool Lord David Dirry-Moir, — the hussy!

Never let any one do you a service; he is sure to abuse the advantage it gives him. Never allow yourself to be found in a state of starvation, — some one will relieve you. Because Barkilphedro was starving, this woman had thought it a sufficient pretext to give him bread; from that moment he was her servant! A craving of the stomach, and you are chained for life! To be under obligations is to be a slave. The happy, the

powerful, make use of the moment you stretch out your hand to place a penny in it; and in your hour of need they make you a slave, and a slave of the worst kind, — the slave of an act of charity; a slave forced to love the enslaver. What infamy! what want of delicacy! what a blow to your self-respect! Then all is over. You are condemned for life to consider this man good, that woman beautiful; to approve, to applaud, to admire, to worship; to prostrate yourself; to blister your knees by long genuflections; to sugar your words when you are gnawing your lips with anger, when you are smothering your cries of fury, and when you have within you more savage turbulence and more bitter foam than the ocean! It is thus that the rich make slaves of the poor. The slime of this good action performed towards you bedaubs and bespatters you with mud for evermore.

The acceptance of alms is irremediable. Gratitude is paralyzing. A benefit has a sticky and repugnant adherence which deprives you of free movement. Those odious, opulent, and spoiled creatures whose pity has thus injured you are well aware of this. It is done, — you are their creature; they have bought you! How? By a bone taken from their dog and cast to you! they have flung the bone at your head; you have been stoned as well as fed. It is all one. Have you gnawed the bone, — yes or no? You have had your place in the dog-kennel just the same; then be thankful, — be eternally thankful. Adore your masters; kneel on indefinitely. A benefit implies an understood inferiority accepted by you. It means that you feel them to be gods and yourself a poor devil. Your humiliation increases their importance; your cringing form makes theirs seem more upright; there is an impertinent inflection in the very tones of their voices. Their family matters, their marriages, their baptisms, their child-bearings, their pro-

geny, all concern you. A wolf-cub is born to them; well, you have to compose a sonnet; you are a poet because you are so low. Is n't it enough to make the stars fall? A little more, and they would make you wear their old shoes!

"Whom have you got there, my dear? How ugly he is! Who is that man?" — "I do not know. A sort of scholar, whom I feed." Thus converse these idiots, without even lowering their voices. You hear, and remain mechanically amiable. If you are ill, your masters will send for the doctor, — not their own; occasionally they may even inquire after you. Being of entirely different clay from you, and so immeasurably far above you, they are affable; their superiority makes them condescending; they know that equality is impossible. At table they give you a little nod; sometimes they absolutely know how your name is spelt! They only show that they are your protectors by walking unconsciously over all the delicacy and susceptibility you possess. They treat you with good-nature. Is all this to be borne?

No doubt Barkilphedro was eager to punish Josiana. He must teach her with whom she had to deal! Oh, my rich lords and ladies! merely because you cannot eat up everything; because opulence causes indigestion, seeing that your stomachs are no bigger than ours; because it is, after all, better to distribute the remainder than to throw it away, — you exalt a morsel flung to the poor into an act of munificence. You give us bread, you give us shelter, you give us clothes, you give us employment; and you carry audacity, folly, cruelty, stupidity, and absurdity to the pitch of believing that we are grateful. The bread is the bread of servitude; the shelter is a footman's bedroom; the clothes are a livery; the employment is ridiculous, paid for, it is true, but brutalizing. Oh, you think you have a right to humili-

ate us with lodging and nourishment, and you imagine that we are your debtors, and count on our gratitude? Very well! we will eat up your substance; we will devour you alive, and tear your heart-strings with our teeth.

This Josiana! was it not absurd? What merit did she possess? She had accomplished the wonderful feat of coming into the world as a testimony to the folly of her father and the shame of her mother. She had done us the favour to exist; and for her kindness in becoming a public scandal, they paid her millions. She had estates and castles, warrens, parks, lakes, forests, and I know not what besides; and with all that she was making a fool of herself, and verses were addressed to her! And Barkilphedro, who had studied and laboured and taken pains, and stuffed his eyes and his brain with great books; who had grown mouldy in old works and in science; who was full of wit; who could command armies; who could, if he would, write tragedies like Otway and Dryden; who was made to be an emperor, — Barkilphedro had been reduced to allowing this nobody to prevent him from dying of hunger! Could the usurpation of the rich, the hateful, spoiled darlings of fortune go further? They put on a semblance of being generous to us, of protecting us, and we smile, — we who would gladly drink their blood and lick our lips afterwards! That this low woman of the court should have the presumption to patronize him, and that such a superior man as himself should be obliged to accept such gifts from such a hand, — what a frightful iniquity! What kind of a social system is this which is founded on such gross injustice? Would it not be best to take it by the four corners, and to throw pell-mell to the ceiling the damask table-cloth, and the festival and the orgies, and the tippling and drunkenness, and the guests, and those with

their elbows on the table, and those with their paws under it, and the insolent who give and the idiots who accept, and fling it all back in the face of Providence! In the mean time let us vent our wrath on Josiana.

Thus mused Barkilphedro; such were the ravings of his soul. It is the habit of the envious man to absolve himself of public wrongs with his own personal grievances. All the wilder forms of hateful passions racked the mind of this ferocious being. In the corners of old maps of the world published in the fifteenth century are big vacant spaces, without shape or name, on which are written these three words: "Hic sunt leones." There is a similar corner in the human soul. Passions rage and growl somewhere within us, and we truly may say of the dark side of our souls that "there are lions here."

Is this chain of reasoning absolutely absurd? Does it lack a certain amount of justice? We must confess it does not. It is fearful to think that the judgment within us is not justice. Judgment is relative; justice is absolute. Think of the difference between a judge and a just man. Wicked men lead conscience astray with authority. There are gymnastics of untruth. A sophist is a forger, and this forger sometimes brutalizes good sense. A certain very supple, very implacable, and very agile logic is at the service of evil, and excels in stabbing truth in the dark. These are blows aimed by the devil at Providence.

The worst of it was that Barkilphedro had a presentiment of failure. He was undertaking a difficult task, and he was afraid that, after all, the evil achieved might not be proportionate to the work. To be as full of corrosion as he was; to possess a will of steel; to be imbued with such an intense hatred and wild longing for the catastrophe, — and yet to burn nothing, to decapitate nothing, to exterminate nothing! To possess

such powers of devastation, such voracious animosity; to have been created (for there is a creator, whether God or devil), Barkilphedro, — and to inflict perhaps after all only a tap of the finger! Could this be possible? Could it be that Barkilphedro would miss his aim? To be a lever powerful enough to heave great masses of rock, and when sprung to the utmost power, to succeed only in giving an affected woman a bump in the forehead; to accomplish the task of Sisyphus, and crush only an ant; to sweat all over with hate, and for nothing, — would not this be humiliating, when he felt himself a murderous engine capable of reducing the world to powder! To put into movement all the wheels within wheels, to work in the darkness all the mechanism of a Marly machine, and perhaps only succeed in pinching the tip of a little rosy finger! He must turn huge blocks of marble over and over, perchance with no other result than ruffling the smooth surface of the court a little! Providence has a way of expending its forces grandly. The movement of a mountain often only displaces a mole-hill!

Besides, when the court is the arena, nothing is more dangerous than to aim at your enemy and miss him. In the first place, it unmasks you and irritates him; but besides and above all, it displeases the master. Kings do not like the unskilful. Let us have no contusions, no ugly gashes; kill anybody, but give no one a bloody nose. He who kills is clever; he who wounds is awkward. Kings do not like to see their servants lamed; they are displeased if you chip a porcelain jar on their chimney-piece, or a courtier in their *cortége*. The court must be kept neat; break and replace, — that does not matter. Besides, all this agrees perfectly with the taste of princes for scandal. Speak evil, do none; or if you do, let it be in grand style. Stab, do not scratch,

unless the pin be poisoned. This would be an extenuating circumstance, and was, we may remember, the case with Barkilphedro.

Every malicious pygmy is a phial in which is enclosed Solomon's dragon. The phial is microscopic in size; the dragon is immense, — a formidable condensation, awaiting the gigantic hour of dilation; *ennui* consoled by the premeditation of explosion! The prisoner is larger than the prison. A latent giant, — how wonderful! a minnow which contains a hydra! To be this fearful magical box, to contain within himself a Leviathan, is to the dwarf both a torture and a delight.

Nor would anything have caused Barkilphedro to let go his hold. He was biding his time. Would it ever come? Who knows? He was certainly watching for it. Self-love is mixed up in the malice of the very wicked man. To make holes and gaps in a fortune higher than your own; to undermine it at all risks and perils, carefully concealed, yourself, the while, — is, we repeat, extremely exciting. The player at such a game becomes eager, even to passion; he throws himself into the work as if he were composing an epic. To be very mean and to attack that which is great, is in itself a brilliant action. It is a fine thing to be a flea on a lion. The noble beast feels the bite, and tries to vent his rage upon the atom; an encounter with a tiger would weary him less. See how the actors exchange their parts: the lion, humiliated, feels the sting of the insect, and the flea can say, "I have in my veins the blood of a lion!"

These reflections, however, only half appeased the cravings of Barkilphedro's pride; they were poor consolation. To annoy is one thing; to torment would be infinitely better. One thought haunted Barkilphedro incessantly: he might not succeed in doing more than

slightly irritate Josiana's epidermis. What more could he hope for, — he being so obscure, and she so far above him! A mere scratch is but little satisfaction to him who longs to see the crimson blood of his flayed victim, and to hear her cries as she lies before him worse than naked, without even the natural covering of her skin! With such a craving, how sad to be powerless! Alas, there is nothing perfect! However, he resigned himself. Not being able to do better, he only dreamed half his dream. To play a treacherous trick is something after all.

What a man is he who revenges himself for a benefit received! Barkilphedro was a giant among such men. Usually, ingratitude is forgetfulness; with this man, steeped in wickedness, it was fury. The ordinary ingrate is full of ashes: what was in Barkilphedro? A furnace, — a furnace walled around with hate, silence, and rancour, awaiting Josiana for fuel! Never had a man abhorred a woman to such an extent without cause. How terrible! He thought of her all day and dreamed of her all night. Perhaps he was a little in love with her.

CHAPTER XI.

BARKILPHEDRO IN AMBUSCADE.

TO find the vulnerable spot in Josiana, and to strike her there, was, for the causes we have just mentioned, the imperturbable determination of Barkilphedro. The wish, however, was not enough; the power to accomplish it was also necessary. How was he to set about it? That was the question.

Vulgar vagabonds set with care the scene of any wickedness they intend to commit. They do not feel themselves strong enough to seize the opportunity as it passes, to take possession of it by fair means or foul, and to constrain it to serve them. Cunning scoundrels disdain preliminary combinations; they start out to perform their villainies alone, after arming themselves thoroughly, prepared to avail themselves of any chances which may occur, and then, like Barkilphedro, await the opportunity. They know that a ready-made scheme runs the risk of fitting ill into the events which may present themselves. It is not thus that a man makes himself master of possibilities, and guides them as one pleases. You can make no arrangements with destiny; to-morrow will not obey you. There is a great want of discipline about chance; therefore they watch for it, and summon it suddenly, authoritatively, on the spot, — no plan, no sketch, no rough model, no ready-made shoe ill-fitting the unexpected; they plunge headlong into the dark. To turn to immediate and rapid profit any

circumstance that can aid him is the quality which distinguishes the able scoundrel, and elevates the villain into the demon. To make yourself master of circumstances, that is true genius. The real scoundrel strikes you with the first stone he can pick up. Clever malefactors count on the unexpected, that strange accomplice in so many crimes; they grasp the incident and leap on it: there is no better *Ars poetica* for this species of talent. Meanwhile be sure with whom you have to deal; survey the ground carefully.

With Barkilphedro the ground was Queen Anne. Barkilphedro approached the queen, and so close that sometimes he fancied he heard the monologues of her Majesty. Sometimes he was present at conversations between the sisters; neither did they forbid his slipping in a word now and then. He profited by this to disparage himself, — a way of inspiring confidence. One day in the garden at Hampton Court, being behind the duchess, who was behind the queen, he heard Anne enunciate this sentiment: —

"Brute beasts are fortunate; they run no risk of going to hell."

"They are there already," replied Josiana.

This answer, which bluntly substituted philosophy for religion, displeased the queen. If, perchance, there was any meaning in the observation, Anne felt that she ought to appear shocked.

"My dear," said she to Josiana, "we talk of hell like a couple of fools. We had better ask Barkilphedro about it. He ought to know all about such things."

"As a devil?" said Josiana.

"As a beast," replied Barkilphedro, with a bow.

"Madam," said the queen to Josiana, "he is cleverer than we."

For a man like Barkilphedro to approach the queen

was to obtain a hold on her. He could say, "I hold her." Now, he wanted a means of taking advantage of his power for his own benefit. He had a foothold in the court. To be settled there was a fine thing; no chance could now escape him. More than once he had made the queen smile maliciously. This was equivalent to having a license to shoot. But was there any preserved game? Did this license to shoot permit him to break the wing or the leg of one like the sister of her Majesty? The first point to make clear was, did the queen love her sister? One false step would lose all. Barkilphedro watched.

Before he plays, the player examines his cards. What trumps has he? Barkilphedro began by comparing the ages of the two women,—Josiana, twenty-three; Anne, forty-one. So far so good; he held trumps. The moment that a woman ceases to count her age by springs, and begins to count by winters, she becomes cross. A dull rancour possesses her against the age of which she carries the marks. Fresh-blown beauties, perfumes for others, are to such a one but thorns. Of the roses she feels but the prick. It seems as if all the freshness is stolen from her, and that beauty decreases in her because it increases in others.

To profit by this secret ill-humour, to deepen the furrows on the face of this woman of forty, who was a queen, seemed a good game for Barkilphedro. Envy excels in exciting jealousy, as a rat lures the crocodile from its hole. Barkilphedro fixed his wise gaze on Anne. He saw into the queen, as one sees into a stagnant pool. The marsh has its transparency. In dirty water we see vices; in muddy water we see stupidity. Anne's mind was like muddy water. Embryos of sentiments and larvæ of ideas moved sluggishly about in her thick brain. They were not distinct: they had scarcely

any outline, — but they were realities, though shapeless. The queen thought this; the queen desired that, — to decide what, was the difficulty. The confused transformations which go on in stagnant water are difficult to study. The queen though habitually reserved, sometimes made sudden and stupid revelations. It was on these that it was necessary to seize; he must take advantage of them on the moment. How did the queen feel towards the Duchess Josiana? Did she wish her good or evil? This was the problem. Barkilphedro set himself to solve it. This problem solved, he might venture further.

Divers chances served Barkilphedro, — his constant watchfulness above all. Anne was, on her husband's side, slightly related to the new Queen of Prussia, wife of the king with the hundred chamberlains. She had her portrait painted on enamel, after the process of Turquet, of Mayerne. This Queen of Prussia had also a younger illegitimate sister, the Baroness Drika. One day, in the presence of Barkilphedro, Anne asked the Prussian ambassador some question about this Drika.

"They say she is rich," the queen remarked.

"Very rich."

"She has palaces?"

"More magnificent than those of her sister, the queen."

"Whom will she marry?"

"A great lord, the Count Gormo."

"Is she pretty?"

"Charming."

"Is she young?"

"Very young."

"As beautiful as the queen?"

The ambassador lowered his voice, and replied, "Much more beautiful."

"How outrageous!" murmured Barkilphedro.

The queen was silent, then she muttered angrily, "These bastards!"

Barkilphedro noticed the plural.

Another time, when the queen was leaving the chapel, Barkilphedro kept close to her Majesty, behind the two grooms of the almonry. Lord David Dirry-Moir, as he passed down between the two lines of ladies created quite a sensation by his lordly appearance. As he passed there was a chorus of feminine exclamations, —

"How elegant! How gallant! What a noble air! How handsome!"

"How disagreeable!" grumbled the queen.

Barkilphedro overheard this; it satisfied him. He could hurt the duchess without displeasing the queen.

The first problem was solved; but now the second presented itself. What could he do to harm the duchess? What means did his wretched appointment offer to attain so difficult an object? Evidently none.

CHAPTER XII.

SCOTLAND, IRELAND, AND ENGLAND.

LET us note a circumstance. Josiana had *le tour*. This is easily understood when we reflect that she was, although illegitimate, the queen's sister, — that is to say, a princely personage.

To have *le tour*, — what does it mean? Viscount St. John, otherwise Bolingbroke, wrote as follows to Thomas Lennard, Earl of Sussex: "Two things mark the great: in England, they have *le tour*; in France, *le pour*." When the king of France travelled, the courier of the court stopped at the halting-place in the evening, and assigned lodgings to his Majesty's suite. Among the gentlemen some had an immense privilege. "They have *le pour*," says the "Journal Historique" for the year 1694, page 6; "which means that the quartermaster who marks the billets puts *pour* before their names, as 'Pour M. le Prince de Soubise;' instead of which, when he marks the lodging of one who is not royal, he does not put, *pour*, but simply the name, as 'Le Duc de Gesvres,' 'Le Duc de Mazarin.'" This *pour* on a door indicated a prince or a favourite. A favourite is worse than a prince. The king granted *le pour*, like a blue ribbon or a peerage.

Avoir le tour in England was less glorious, but more tangible. It was a sign of intimacy with the reigning sovereign. Any persons who, either by reason of birth, or royal favour were likely to receive direct communica-

tions from majesty, had in the wall of their bedchamber a shaft, in which a bell was adjusted. The bell sounded, the shaft opened, a royal missive appeared on a gold plate or on a velvet cushion, and the shaft closed. This was at once secret and solemn, mysterious as well as familiar. The shaft was used for no other purpose; the sound of the bell announced a royal message. No one could see who brought it; it was of course merely a page of the king or queen. Leicester *avait le tour* under Elizabeth; Buckingham under James I. Josiana had it under Anne, though not much in favour. Never was a privilege more envied. This privilege entailed additional servility; the recipient was more of a servant. At court that which elevates, degrades. *Avoir le tour* was said in French, — this circumstance of English etiquette having, probably, been borrowed from some old French play.

Lady Josiana, a virgin peeress as Elizabeth had been a virgin queen, led (sometimes in the city, and sometimes in the country, according to the season) an almost princely life, and kept nearly a court, at which Lord David was courtier, with many others. Not being married, Lord David and Lady Josiana could show themselves together in public without exciting ridicule; and they did so frequently. They often went to plays and race-courses in the same carriage, and sat together in the same box. They were chilled by the impending marriage, which was not only permitted to them, but imposed upon them; but they felt an attraction for each other's society. The privacy permitted to the engaged has a frontier easily passed. From this they abstained: that which is easy is in bad taste.

The best pugilistic encounters then took place at Lambeth, a parish in which the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury has a palace (though the air there is un-

healthy) and a rich library open at certain hours to decent people. One evening in winter there was in a meadow there, the gates of which were locked, a fight, which Josiana, escorted by Lord David, attended.

"Are women admitted?" she had asked.

"Sunt fæminæ magnates!" David had responded.

The free translation of this is, "Plebeian women are not." The literal translation is, "Great ladies are." A duchess goes everywhere. This is why Lady Josiana saw a boxing-match.

Lady Josiana made only this concession to propriety, — she dressed like a man, a very common custom at that period; women seldom travelled otherwise. Out of every six persons who travelled by the coach from Windsor one or two were women in male attire, — a certain sign of high birth. Lady Josiana betrayed her quality in one way, — she had an opera-glass, then used by gentlemen only.

Lord David, being in company with a woman, could not take any part in the match himself, and merely assisted as one of the audience. This encounter in the noble science of boxing was presided over by Lord Germaine, great-grandfather, or grand-uncle, of that Lord Germaine who towards the end of the eighteenth century was colonel, ran away in a battle from the regiment which he commanded, but who was afterwards made minister of war, and only escaped from the shells of the enemy to fall by a worse fate, — shot through and through by Sheridan's sarcasms. Many gentlemen were betting, — Harry Bellew of Carleton, who had claims to the extinct peerage of Bella-aqua, with Henry, Lord Hyde, member of Parliament for the borough of Dunhivid, which is also called Launceston; the Honourable Peregrine Bertie, member for the borough of Truro, with Sir Thomas Colpepper, member for Maidstone; the Laird

of Lamyrbau, which is on the borders of Lothian, with Samuel Trefusis, of the borough of Penryn; Sir Bartholomew Gracedieu, of the borough of Saint Ives, with the Honourable Charles Bodville, who was called Lord Robartes, and who was Custos Rotulorum of the county of Cornwall; besides many others.

Of the two combatants, one was an Irishman, named after his native mountain in Tipperary, Phelem-ghe-Madone; and the other a Scot, named Helmsgail. They represented the national honour of each country. Ireland and Scotland were about to encounter each other; Erin was going to fisticuff Gajothel. So that the bets amounted to over forty thousand guineas, besides the stakes. The two champions were naked, excepting short breeches buckled over the hips, and spiked boots laced as high as the ankles.

Helmsgail, the Scot, was a youth scarcely nineteen, but he had already had his forehead sewn up, for which reason they laid two and one third to one on him. The month before he had broken the ribs and gouged out the eyes of a pugilist, named Sixmileswater; this explained the enthusiasm he created, — he had won his backers twelve thousand pounds. Besides having his forehead sewn up, Helmsgail's jaw had been broken. He was neatly made and active. He was about the height of a small woman, erect, thick set, and of a stature low and threatening. None of the advantages given him by nature had been lost; not a muscle which was not trained to its object, pugilism. His firm chest was compact, and brown and shining like brass. He smiled, and the loss of three teeth added to the effect of his smile.

Phelem-ghe-Madone, the Irishman, was tall and overgrown, — that is to say, weak. He was a man about forty years of age, six feet high, with the chest of a

hippopotamus, and a mild expression of face. A blow from his fist would shatter the deck of a vessel; but he did not know how to use his strength. He was all surface, and seemed to have entered the ring to receive, rather than to give, blows. Only it was felt that he could bear a deal of punishment, — like underdone beef, tough to chew, and impossible to swallow. He was what was termed, in local slang, "raw meat." He squinted. He seemed resigned.

The two men had passed the preceding night in the same bed, and had slept together. They had each drunk port wine from the same glass, to the three-inch mark. Each had his party of seconds, — men of savage expression, threatening the umpires when it suited their side. Among Helmsgail's supporters was to be seen John Gromane, celebrated for having carried an ox on his back; and also one called John Bray, who had once carried on his back ten bushels of flour, at fifteen pecks to the bushel, besides the miller himself, and had walked over two hundred yards under the weight. On the side of Phelem-ghe-Madone, Lord Hyde had brought from Launceston a certain Kilter, who lived at Green Castle, and could throw a stone weighing twenty pounds to a greater height than the highest tower of the castle. These three men, Kilter, Bray, and Gromane, were Cornishmen by birth, and did honour to their county. The other seconds were brutal fellows, with broad backs, bowed legs, knotted fists, dull faces; ragged, fearing nothing, nearly all jail-birds. Many of them understood admirably how to get the police drunk; each profession requires its special talents.

The field chosen was farther off than the bear-garden, where they formerly baited bears, bulls, and dogs; it was beyond the line of the farthest houses, by the side of the ruins of the Priory of Saint Mary Overy, dis-

mantled by Henry VIII. The wind was northerly, and biting; a slight rain fell, which was instantly frozen into ice. Some gentlemen present were evidently fathers of families, recognized as such by their putting up their umbrellas.

On the side of Phelem-ghe-Madone was Colonel Moncreif as umpire; and Kilter, as second, to support him on his knee. On the side of Helmsgail, the Honourable Pughe Beaumaris was umpire; with Lord Desertum, from Kilcarry, as bottle-holder, to support him on his knee.

The two combatants stood for a few seconds motionless in the ring, while the watches were being compared; they then approached each other and shook hands.

"I should prefer going home," remarked Phelem-ghe-Madone to Helmsgail.

"The gentlemen must not be disappointed, on any account," Helmsgail answered handsomely.

Naked as they were, they felt the cold. Phelem-ghe-Madone shook. His teeth chattered.

Doctor Eleanor Sharpe, nephew of the Archbishop of York, cried out to them: "Set to, boys! it will warm you."

These friendly words thawed them. They set to. But neither of the two men had his blood up; there were three ineffectual rounds.

The Rev. Doctor Gumdraith, one of the forty Fellows of All Souls' College, cried, "Spirit them up with gin!"

But the two umpires and the two seconds adhered to the rules, although it was exceedingly cold.

First blood was claimed. The combatants were again set face to face. They looked at each other, approached, stretched their arms, touched each other's fists, and then drew back. All at once Helmsgail, the little man,

sprang forward: the real fight had begun. Phelem-ghe-Madone was struck in the face, between the eyes. His whole face streamed with blood.

The crowd cried, "Helmsgail has tapped his claret!"

There was wild applause. Phelem-ghe-Madone, turning his arms like the sails of a windmill, struck out at random. The Honourable Peregrine Bertie said, "Blinded!" but the man was not blind yet.

Then Helmsgail heard on all sides these encouraging words: "Bung up his peepers!"

On the whole, the two champions were really well matched; and notwithstanding the unfavourable weather, it was evident that the fight would be a success. The burly giant, Phelem-ghe Madone, had to bear the inconvenience of his advantages; he moved heavily. His arms were massive as clubs; but his chest was a mass. His little opponent ran, struck, sprang, gnashed his teeth; redoubling vigour by quickness, from knowledge of the science. On the one side was the primitive blow of the fist, — savage, uncultivated, in a state of ignorance; on the other side was the civilized blow of the fist. Helmsgail fought as much with his nerves as with his muscles, and with far more skill than strength; Phelem-ghe-Madone was a kind of sluggish mauler, — somewhat mauled himself, to begin with. It was art against nature; it was cultivated ferocity against barbarism. It was clear that the barbarian would be beaten, but not very quickly; hence the interest. Put a little man against a big one, and the chances are in favour of the little one. The cat generally has the best of it with a dog. Goliaths are always vanquished by Davids.

A chorus of encouraging exclamations cheered on the combatants: —

"Bravo, Helmsgail!"

"Good! well done, Highlander!"

"Now, Phelem!"

And the friends of Helmsgail repeated their benevolent exhortation: "Bung up his peepers!"

Helmsgail did better. Rapidly bending down and back again, with the undulating movement of a serpent, he struck Phelem-ghe-Madone in the sternum. The Colossus staggered.

"Foul blow!" cried Viscount Barnard.

Phelem-ghe-Madone sank down on the knee of his second, saying: "I am beginning to get warm."

Lord Desertum consulted the umpires, and said: "Five minutes before time is called."

Phelem-ghe-Madone was becoming weaker. Kilter wiped the blood from his face and the sweat from his body with a flannel, and placed the neck of a bottle to his mouth. They had come to the eleventh round. Phelem, besides the scar on his forehead, had his breast disfigured by blows, his belly swollen, and the fore part of the head scarified. Helmsgail was untouched.

A kind of tumult arose among the gentlemen.

"Foul blow!" repeated Viscount Barnard.

"Bets void!" said the Laird of Lamyrbau.

"I claim my stake!" replied Sir Thomas Colpepper.

"Give me back my five hundred guineas, and I will go. Stop the fight!" added the honourable member for the borough of St. Ives, Sir Bartholomew Gracedieu.

Phelem arose, staggering like a drunken man, and said: "Let us go on fighting, on one condition, — that I also shall have the right to give one foul blow."

They cried, "Agreed!" from all parts of the ring. Helmsgail shrugged his shoulders. Five minutes elapsed, and they set to again.

The fighting, which was agony to Phelem, was play to Helmsgail; such are the triumphs of science. The little man found means of putting the big one into chancery; that is to say, Helmsgail suddenly took under his left arm, which was bent like a steel crescent, the huge head of Phelem-ghe-Madone, and held it there under his armpit, the neck bent and twisted, while the Scot used his right fist again and again, like a hammer on a nail, only from below and striking upwards, thus smashing his opponent's face at his ease. When Phelem, released at last, lifted his head, he no longer possessed a face. That which had been a nose, eyes, and a mouth now looked like a black sponge soaked in blood. He spat, and four of his teeth fell to the ground. Then he also fell. Kilter raised him on his knee.

Helmsgail was hardly touched: he had some insignificant bruises, and a scratch on his collar bone.

No one was cold now. They bet sixteen and a quarter to one on Helmsgail. Harry Carleton cried out, —

"It is all over with Phelem-ghe-Madone. I'll bet my peerage of Bella-aqua and my title of Lord Bellew against the Archbishop of Canterbury's old wig, on Helmsgail."

"Give me your muzzle," said Kilter to Phelem-ghe-Madone. And stuffing the bloody flannel into the bottle, he washed him all over with gin. The mouth reappeared, and he opened one eyelid. His temples seemed fractured.

"One round more, my friend," said Kilter; and he added, "for the honour of the low town."

The Welshman and the Irishman understand each other, though Phelem gave no sign of having any power of understanding left. He arose, supported by Kilter. It was the twenty-fifth round. From the way in which this Cyclops (for he had but one eye) placed himself in

position, it was evident that this was the last round, for no one doubted his defeat. He placed his guard below his chin, with the awkwardness of a failing man.

Helmsgail, with a skin hardly sweating, cried out: "I 'll back myself, a thousand to one." Then raising his arm, struck out.

Strange to say, both men went down. A ghastly chuckle was heard. It was Phelem-ghe-Madone's expression of delight. While receiving the terrible blow given him by Helmsgail on the skull, he had given him a foul blow on the navel. Helmsgail, lying on his back, rattled in his throat.

The spectators looked at him as he lay on the ground, and said, "Paid back!" All clapped their hands, even those who had lost. Phelem-ghe-Madone had given foul blow for foul blow, and done what he had a right to do. They carried Helmsgail off on a hand-barrow. The opinion was that he would not recover.

Lord Robartes exclaimed, "I win twelve hundred guineas."

Phelem-ghe-Madone was evidently maimed for life.

As she left, Josiana took the arm of Lord David, — an act which was tolerated among people "engaged," — saying to him, —

"It was very fine; but — "

"But what?"

"I thought it would have driven away my *ennui;* but it has n't."

Lord David stopped, looked at Josiana, shut his mouth, and inflated his cheeks, while he nodded his head, as if to signify, "Indeed?" Then he said, —

"There is but one effectual cure for *ennui.*"

"What is that?" asked Josiana.

"Gwynplaine," replied Lord David.

"And who is Gwynplaine?" asked the duchess.

BOOK II.

GWYNPLAINE AND DEA.

CHAPTER I.

WHEREIN WE SEE THE FACE OF HIM OF WHOM WE HAVE HITHERTO SEEN ONLY THE ACTS.

NATURE had been prodigal in her kindness to Gwynplaine. She had given him a mouth opening to his ears, ears folding over to his eyes, a shapeless nose to support the spectacles of the grimace-maker, and a face that no one could look upon without laughing.

We have just said that Nature had loaded Gwynplaine with her gifts. But was it Nature? Had she not been assisted? Two slits for eyes, a hiatus for a mouth, a snub protuberance with two holes for nostrils, a flattened face,— all producing the effect of violent laughter, — certainly Nature never produced such perfection single-handed. But is laughter a synonym of joy?

If in the presence of this mountebank (for he was one) the first impression of gaiety wore off, and the man's countenance was examined closely, traces of art were recognizable. Such a face could never have been created by chance; it must have been the result of intention. Such perfection of detail is not found in Nature. Man can do nothing to create beauty, but everything to produce ugliness. A Hottentot profile cannot be changed

into a Roman outline, but out of a Grecian nose you may make a Calmuck's; it is only necessary to obliterate the root of the nose, and to flatten the nostrils. The Latin of the Middle Ages had a reason for its creation of the verb *denasare*.

Had Gwynplaine when a child been so worthy of attention that his face had been subjected to a complete transformation? Why not? Was any more powerful motive needed than the profits which would accrue from his future exhibition? According to all appearance, industrious manipulators of children had worked upon his face. It seemed evident that a mysterious and probably occult science (which was to surgery what alchemy was to chemistry) had chiselled his flesh, evidently at a very tender age, and created this countenance intentionally. This science, clever with the knife and skilled in the use of anæsthetics and ligatures, had enlarged the mouth, cut away the lips, laid bare the gums, distended the ears, displaced the eyelids and the cheeks, enlarged the zygomatic muscle, pressed the scars and cicatrices to a level, and turned back the skin over the lesions while the face was thus distorted, — from all which resulted that wonderful and appalling work of art, the *mask* which Gwynplaine wore.

The manipulation of Gwynplaine had succeeded admirably. Gwynplaine was a gift of providence to dispel the sadness of man. Of which providence? Is there a providence of demons as well as of God? We put the question without answering it.

Gwynplaine was a mountebank. He exhibited himself on the platform. No such effect had ever before been produced. Hypochondriacs were cured by the mere sight of him. He was avoided by folks in mourning, because they were compelled to laugh when they saw him, without regard to their decent gravity. One day

the chief executioner came to see him, and Gwynplaine made him laugh. People who saw Gwynplaine were obliged to hold their sides; he spoke, and they rolled on the ground. He was as far removed from sadness as pole is from pole: spleen at the one, Gwynplaine at the other. Consequently on fair-grounds and village-greens he speedily gained the enviable appellation of "that horrible man."

It was Gwynplaine's laugh that so excited the mirth of others; yet he did not laugh himself. His face laughed; his thoughts did not. The extraordinary face which chance, or a special and weird industry, had fashioned for him laughed of itself; Gwynplaine had nothing to do with it. The exterior did not depend on the interior. The laugh which he himself had not placed on brow and eyelids and mouth, he was powerless to remove. It had been stamped indelibly on his face; it was automatic, and the more irresistible because it seemed petrified. No one could escape the powerful effect of this grimace. Two convulsions of the face are infectious, — laughing and yawning. By reason of the mysterious operation to which Gwynplaine had probably been subjected in his infancy, every part of his face contributed to that grin; his whole physiognomy led to that result, as a wheel centres in the hub. All his emotions augmented this strange expression; or, to speak more correctly, aggravated it. Any astonishment which might seize him, any suffering which he might feel, any anger which might take possession of him, any pity which might move him, only increased this hilarity of his muscles. If he wept he laughed; and whatever Gwynplaine was, whatever he wished to be, whatever he thought, the moment that he raised his head the crowd (if crowd there was) had before them one impersonation, — an overwhelming burst of laughter. It was

like a head of Medusa, but Medusa hilarious. Every serious feeling or thought in the mind of the spectator was suddenly put to flight by the unexpected apparition, and laughter was inevitable.

Antique art formerly placed on the exterior of the Greek theatre a joyous brazen face, called Comedy; it laughed and occasioned laughter, but remained pensive. All mirth which borders on folly, all irony which borders on wisdom, were condensed and amalgamated in that face. Intense anxiety, disappointment, disgust, and chagrin were all depicted in the rigid features; but a ghastly smile wreathed the lips, imparting an expression of lugubrious mirth to the entire countenance. One corner of the mouth was curled upward in mockery of the human race; the other, in blasphemy of the gods. Those who eagerly crowded around to gaze at this grim exemplification of the covert sarcasm and irony which dwells in every human breast, nearly died with laughter at the sepulchral immobility of the sneering smile.

One might almost have said that Gwynplaine was that dark, dead mask of ancient comedy, adjusted to the body of a living man; that he supported on his neck that infernal head of implacable hilarity. What a weight for the shoulders of a man, — an everlasting laugh!

An everlasting laugh! That we may be understood we will explain that the Manicheans believed that even the absolute occasionally gave way; that God himself sometimes abdicates for a time. But we do not admit that the will can ever be utterly powerless. The whole of existence resembles a letter modified in the postscript. For Gwynplaine the postscript was this: by force of will, by concentrating all his attention, and allowing no emotion to impair the intentness of his effort, he could manage to suspend the everlasting rictus of his face,

and to throw over it for a moment a kind of tragic veil; and then the spectator no longer laughed, — he shuddered. This exertion Gwynplaine scarcely ever made; it was a terrible effort, and an insupportable tension. Moreover, it happened that on the slightest distraction or change of emotion, the laugh, driven away for a moment, returned like the tide, with an impulse which was irresistible in proportion to the force of the adverse emotion. With this exception Gwynplaine's laugh was everlasting.

On first seeing Gwynplaine, everybody laughed. When they had laughed they turned away their heads. Women especially shrank from him with horror. The man was frightful. The paroxysm of laughter was a sort of spontaneous tribute paid to his deformity; they yielded to it gladly, but almost mechanically. Besides, when once the novelty was over, Gwynplaine was intolerable for a woman to see, and impossible to contemplate long. Yet he was tall, well-made, agile, and in no way deformed except in his face.

This strengthened the presumption that Gwynplaine was rather a creation of art than a work of Nature. Gwynplaine, beautiful in figure, had probably been equally beautiful in face. At his birth he had doubtless resembled other infants, and the body had been left intact, and the face alone been retouched. Gwynplaine had been made to order, — at least, that was probably the case. They had left him his teeth: teeth are necessary to a laugh; the death's head retains them. The operation performed on him must have been frightful. That he had no remembrance of it was no proof that it had never been performed. Surgical sculpture of the kind could never have succeeded except on a very young child, and consequently one who had little consciousness of what happened to him, and who might easily take a wound for an illness. Besides, we must re-

member that they had in those times means of putting patients to sleep, and of suppressing all suffering; only then it was called magic, while now it is called anæsthesia.

Besides this face, those who had brought him up had given him the resources of a gymnast and an athlete. His joints had been skilfully dislocated, and trained to bend the wrong way; so that they could move backward and forward with equal ease, like the hinges of a door. In preparing him for the profession of mountebank nothing had been neglected. His hair had been dyed ochre colour once for all, — a secret which has been rediscovered at the present day. Pretty women avail themselves of it, and that which was formerly considered ugly is now considered an embellishment. Gwynplaine's hair had probably been dyed with some corrosive preparation, for it was very woolly and rough to the touch. The yellow bristles, a mane rather than a head of hair, covered and concealed a lofty brow, evidently made to contain thought. The operation, whatever it had been, which had deprived his features of harmony, and put all their flesh awry, had had no effect on the contour of the head. The facial angle was powerful and symmetrical. Behind his laugh there was a soul, dreaming, as all souls dream. Besides, this laugh was quite a talent to Gwynplaine. He could not prevent it, so he turned it to account. He earned his living by it.

Gwynplaine, as you have probably already guessed, was the child abandoned one winter evening on the coast of Portland, and subsequently sheltered by Ursus at Weymouth.

CHAPTER II.

DEA.

THAT boy was now a man. Fifteen years had elapsed. It was 1705. Gwynplaine was in his twenty-fifth year.

Ursus had kept the two children with him. They formed one family of wanderers. Ursus and Homo had aged. Ursus had become quite bald; the wolf was growing grey. The age of wolves is not known like that of dogs. According to Molière, there are wolves which live to eighty,—among others the little koupara, and the rank wolf, the *Canis nubilus* of Say.

The little girl found on the dead woman was now a tall creature of sixteen, with brown hair, slight, and exceedingly fragile in appearance, but wonderfully beautiful, with eyes full of brilliancy, though sightless. That fatal winter night which threw down the beggar woman and her infant in the snow had struck a double blow,—it had killed the mother, and blinded the child. Amaurosis had dimmed forever the eyes of the girl, now become a woman in her turn. On her face, through which the light of day never passed, the depressed corners of the mouth indicated the bitterness of the privation. Her eyes, large and clear, had this strange characteristic: extinguished forever to her, to others they were brilliant. They were mysterious torches lighting only the outside; they gave light, but possessed it not. These sightless eyes were resplendent. This prisoner of

darkness illumined the dull place she inhabited. From the depths of her incurable darkness, from behind the black wall called blindness, she flung her rays. She saw not the sun without, but her soul was perceptible from within. In her gaze there was a celestial earnestness. She was the spirit of night, and from the irremediable darkness with which she was enshrouded she shone a star.

Ursus, with his mania for Latin names, had christened her Dea. He had taken his wolf into consultation. He had said to him, "You represent man; I represent the beasts. We are of the lower world; this little one shall represent the world above. Such feebleness is all-powerful. So shall the three orders of the universe be represented in our humble abode, — the human, the animal, and the divine." The wolf made no objection. Therefore the foundling was called Dea.

As to Gwynplaine, Ursus had not had the trouble of inventing a name for him. The morning of the day on which he had realized the disfigurement of the little boy and the blindness of the infant, he said to him: —

"Boy, what is your name?"

"They call me Gwynplaine," answered the boy.

"Be Gwynplaine, then," said Ursus.

If there be such a thing as summing up human misery, it seemed to have been summed up in Gwynplaine and Dea. Each seemed to have been born in a sepulchre, — Gwynplaine of the horrors of it, Dea of the gloom. There was something of the phantom in Dea, and something of the spectre in Gwynplaine. For Gwynplaine, who could see, there was a heartrending possibility, to which Dea, who was blind, would never be subjected, — the chance of comparing himself with other men; and to one in Gwynplaine's situation, to compare himself with other men was to understand himself no longer.

It is distressing, indeed, to be devoid of sight like Dea; but it is much more distressing to be an enigma to oneself, to see the universe, and not to be able to see oneself, — as was the case with Gwynplaine. Dea had a veil over her, — darkness; Gwynplaine wore a mask, — his face. And, strange to say, it was with his own flesh that Gwynplaine was masked. What his own face had been like he knew not: that face was gone forever. They had affixed a false self to him. His brain lived, and his face was dead; he did not even remember to have ever seen it. While Dea's isolation was terrible, because she could see nothing, Gwynplaine's isolation was even more terrible because he could see everything. For Dea, creation never exceeded the limits of touch and hearing; for Gwynplaine, life was to have mankind ever before him and — beyond him. Dea was debarred from light of the world; Gwynplaine was debarred from the light of life, — from all that makes life desirable. They were certainly two terribly unfortunate creatures; they seemed to be beyond the pale of hope. No observer could fail to feel boundless pity for them. How terribly they must have suffered! Surely, no such dire misfortunes had ever before befallen two innocent human beings, and conspired to make their life a hell!

And yet these two were perfectly happy. They loved each other. Gwynplaine adored Dea; Dea idolized Gwynplaine. "How handsome you are!" she often remarked to him.

CHAPTER III.

"OCULOS NON HABET, ET VIDET."

ONLY one woman on earth saw Gwynplaine. That was the blind girl. She had heard what Gwynplaine had done for her, from Ursus, to whom the lad had described his rough journey from Portland to Weymouth, and the many sufferings which he had endured after he was deserted by the gang. She knew that when she was an infant lying upon her dead mother's breast, sucking a corpse, a child very little larger than herself had found her; that this being, exiled and as it were crushed by the refusal of the world to aid him, had heard her cry; that though all the world was deaf to him, he had not been deaf to her; that this child, alone, weak, cast off, without any resting-place here below, dragging himself over the waste, exhausted by fatigue, had accepted from the hands of night a heavy burden, — another child; that he, who had nothing to expect of Fate, had charged himself with another destiny; that naked, in anguish and distress, he had made himself a Providence; that when Heaven failed, he had opened his heart; that though lost himself, he had saved her; that having neither roof-tree nor shelter he had been an asylum; that he had made himself mother and nurse; that he who was thus alone in the world had responded to desertion by adoption; that lost in the darkness he had set an example; that as if not sufficiently burdened already he had added to his load another's misery; that

in this world, which seemed to contain no hope for him, he had found a duty; that where every one else would have hesitated, he had advanced; that where every one else would have drawn back, he had consented; that he had put his hand into the very jaws of the grave and drawn her, Dea, out; that himself half naked, he had given her his rags, because she was cold; that famished, he had thought of giving her food and drink; that for one poor little creature, another little creature had combated death; that he had fought it under every form, — under the form of winter and snow, under the form of solitude, under the form of terror, under the form of cold, hunger, and thirst, under the form of whirlwind; and that for her, Dea, this Titan of ten years had bravely battled with the elements. She knew that as a child he had done all this, and that now as a man he was strength to her weakness, riches to her poverty, healing to her sickness, and sight to her blindness. She was fully conscious of his devotion, self-abnegation, and courage. Moral heroism possesses an even more potent charm than physical heroism; and in the abstraction in which thought lives, when unlighted by the sun, Dea clearly perceived these heroic virtues. In the environment of dark objects set in motion, which was the sole impression the realities of life made upon her; in the uneasy quietude of a creature necessarily passive, yet ever on the watch for possible danger; in the sensation of being ever defenceless, which is the life of the blind, — Dea felt Gwynplaine ever beside her: Gwynplaine, never indifferent, never cold, never gloomy, but always sympathetic, sweet-tempered, and helpful. Dea fairly trembled with happiness and gratitude; her anxiety changed into ecstasy, and with her mind's eye she gazed up from the depths of her abyss to the glad light of his goodness in the zenith.

Kindness is the sunshine of the spiritual world; so it is little wonder that Gwynplaine quite dazzled poor Dea. To the crowd, which has too many heads to have a thought, and too many eyes to have a clear vision,—to the crowd who, superficial themselves, judge only by the surface, Gwynplaine was a clown, a merry-andrew, a mountebank, a grotesque creature, very little more or less than a beast. The crowd knew only the face. For Dea, Gwynplaine was the saviour who had gathered her up in his arms in the tomb, and borne her out of it; the consoler who made life tolerable; the liberator, whose hand guided her through that labyrinth called blindness. Gwynplaine was her brother, friend, guide, support; the personification of heavenly power, the husband, winged and resplendent. Where the multitude saw the monster, Dea recognized the archangel. This was because Dea, being blind, could see the soul.

CHAPTER IV.

WELL-MATCHED LOVERS.

URSUS, being a philosopher, understood all this, and approved of Dea's infatuation. The blind see the invisible. He said, "Conscience is vision." Then, looking at Gwynplaine, he murmured, "Half-monster, but demi god, nevertheless."

Gwynplaine, on the other hand, was madly in love with Dea. There is the invisible eye, — the spirit; and the visible eye, — the pupil. He saw her with the visible eye. Dea was dazzled by the ideal; Gwynplaine, by the real. Gwynplaine was not ugly; he was frightful. He saw his contrast before him: in proportion as he was terrible, Dea was lovely. He was the personification of the horrible; she was the embodiment of grace. Dea was a dream. She seemed a vision scarcely embodied. In her Grecian form; in her delicate and supple figure, swaying like a reed; in her shoulders, on which might have been invisible wings; in the modest curves which indicated her sex, to the soul rather than to the senses; in her fairness, which amounted almost to transparency; in the earnest and quiet serenity of her look, divinely shut out from earth; in the sacred innocence of her smile, — she was almost an angel, and yet a woman.

Gwynplaine's existence might be compared to the point of intersection of two rays; one from below and one from above, — a black and a white ray. The same

crumb may perhaps be pecked at, at once, by the beaks of evil and good, — one giving a bite, the other a kiss. Gwynplaine was this crumb, — an atom, at once wounded and caressed. Misfortune had laid its hand upon him, and happiness as well. He had on him an anathema and a benediction. He was one of the elect, and one of the accursed. Who was he? He knew not. When he looked at himself, he saw one he knew not; but this unknown was a monster. Gwynplaine lived as it were beheaded, with a face which did not belong to him. This face was frightful, so frightful that it was absurd. It caused as much fear as laughter; it was a hell-concocted absurdity; it was the transformation of a human face into the mask of an animal. Never had there been such a total eclipse of humanity in any human face, never a more complete caricature; never had a more frightful apparition grinned in nightmare; never had everything that is repulsive to woman been more hideously amalgamated in a man. The unfortunate heart, masked and calumniated by the face, seemed forever condemned to solitude under it, as under a tombstone. Yet, no! When unknown malice had done its worst, invisible goodness lent its aid. It had caused a soul to fly with swift wings towards the deserted one; it had sent the dove to console the creature whom the thunderbolt had overwhelmed, and had made beauty adore deformity. For this to be possible it was necessary that beauty should not see the disfigurement. To bring about this good fortune, a misfortune was necessary; so Providence had deprived Dea of sight.

Gwynplaine vaguely felt himself the object of a redemption. Why had he been persecuted? He knew not. Why redeemed? He knew not. All he knew was that a halo had encircled his brand. When Gwynplaine had been old enough to understand, Ursus had read and explained to him the text of Doctor Conquest,

"De Denasatis," and in another folio, Hugo Plagon, the passage, "Nares habens mutilas;" but Ursus had prudently abstained from "hypotheses," and had been reserved in his opinion of what it might mean. Suppositions were possible. The probability of violence inflicted on Gwynplaine when an infant was hinted at; but for Gwynplaine there was no proof except the result. It seemed to be his destiny to live under a stigma. Why this stigma? There was no answer. Everything connected with Gwynplaine's childhood was shrouded in mystery; nothing was certain save the one terrible fact.

In Gwynplaine's dire despondency Dea had angelically interposed between him and despair, and he perceived, that, horrible as he was, a sort of beautified wonder was softening his monstrous visage. Having been fashioned to create dread, he was, by a miraculous exception to the general rule, admired and adored as an angel of light by one who seemed as far above him as a star. Gwynplaine and Dea made a perfect pair; so these two suffering hearts very naturally adored each other. One nest and two birds, — that was their story. They had begun to obey the universal law, — to please, to seek, and to find.

Thus hatred had made a mistake. The persecutors of Gwynplaine, whoever they might have been, had missed their aim. They had intended to drive him to desperation: they had succeeded in driving him into enchantment. They had affianced him beforehand to a healing wound; they had predestined him to be consoled by an affliction. The pincers of the executioner had softly changed into the delicately moulded hand of a girl. Gwynplaine was horrible, — made horrible by the hand of man. They had hoped to exile him forever, — first, from his family, if his family existed; and then from humanity. When an infant, they had made him a ruin.

Of this ruin Nature had repossessed herself, as she does of all ruins. Nature had consoled this solitary heart, as she consoles all solitudes. Nature comes to the aid of the deserted; when everything fails them she gives them herself. She flourishes and grows green amid ruins; she has ivy for the stones, and boundless sympathy for man.

CHAPTER V.

THE BLUE SKY THROUGH THE BLACK CLOUD.

SO these unfortunate creatures lived on together,— Dea depending, Gwynplaine sustaining. These orphans were all in all to each other; the feeble and the deformed were betrothed. Bliss unspeakable had resulted from their distress.

They were grateful. To whom? To the great Unknown. Be grateful in your own hearts, that suffices. Thanksgiving has wings, and flies to the right destination; your prayer knows its way better than you can. How many men have believed that they were praying to Jupiter, when they were really praying to Jehovah! How many believers in amulets are listened to by the Almighty! How many atheists there are who know not that in the simple fact of being good and sad they pray to God!

Gwynplaine and Dea were grateful. Deformity is exile; blindness is a precipice. The exiled one had been adopted; the precipice was habitable. Gwynplaine had seen a brilliant light descend upon him. As if in a dream he beheld a white cloud of beauty having the form of a woman, a radiant vision endowed with a heart. This phantom, part cloud and part woman, clasped him; the apparition embraced him, and the heart craved him. Gwynplaine was no longer deformed; he was beloved. The rose had demanded the caterpillar in marriage, feel-

ing that within the caterpillar there was a divine butterfly. Gwynplaine the rejected, was chosen.

To have one's desire is everything. Gwynplaine had his, Dea hers. The dejection of the disfigured man was changed to profound gratitude and intoxicating delight. The wretched found a refuge in each other: two blanks, combining, filled each other. They were bound together by what they lacked: in that in which one was poor, the other was rich. The misfortune of the one was the good fortune of the other. If Dea had not been blind, would she have chosen Gwynplaine? If Gwynplaine had not been disfigured, would he have preferred Dea? She would probably have rejected the deformed man, as he would have passed by the afflicted woman. Hence how fortunate it was for Dea that Gwynplaine was hideous; and how fortunate for Gwynplaine that Dea was blind! A mighty need of each other was the foundation of their love. Gwynplaine saved Dea; Dea saved Gwynplaine. Apposition of misery produced adherence. It was the embrace of those swallowed in the abyss, — none closer, none more hopeless, none more exquisite.

"What should I be without her?" Gwynplaine thought.

"What should I be without him?" Dea thought.

The exile of each made a country for both. Two hopeless fatalities, Gwynplaine's hideousness and Dea's blindness, united them. They sufficed to each other; they imagined nothing beyond each other. To speak to each other was a delight; to approach was beatitude. By force of reciprocal intuition they became united in the same reverie, and thought the same thoughts. In Gwynplaine's tread Dea fancied she heard the step of one deified. They tightened their hold upon each other in a sort of sidereal *chiaroscuro*, full of perfumes, of

light, and of music, in the radiant land of dreams. They belonged to each other; they knew themselves to be forever united in the same joy and the same ecstasy, and nothing could be stranger than this construction of an Eden by two of the damned. They were inexpressibly happy. Out of their hell they had created a heaven. Such is thy power, O Love! Dea heard Gwynplaine's laugh; Gwynplaine saw Dea's smile. Thus ideal felicity was created; the perfect joy of life was realized; the mysterious problem of happiness was solved. By whom? By two outcasts.

To Gwynplaine, Dea was splendour; to Dea, Gwynplaine was presence. Presence is that profound mystery which renders the invisible world divine, and from which results that other mystery, — faith. In religions this is the one thing which is irreducible; but this irreducible thing suffices. The great motive power is not seen, it is felt. Gwynplaine was Dea's religion. Sometimes, lost in her sense of love towards him, she knelt, like a beautiful priestess before a gnome in a pagoda, made happy by her adoration. Imagine to yourself an unfathomable abyss; in the centre of this abyss an oasis of light; and on this oasis two creatures shut out of any other life, dazzling each other. No purity could be compared to their loves. Dea did not even know what a kiss might be, though perhaps she desired it; because blindness, especially in a woman, has its dreams, and though trembling at the approaches of the unknown does not fear them all. As for Gwynplaine, his unhappy youth had made him sensitive. The more intensely he loved, the more timid he became. He might have dared anything with this companion of his early youth, with this creature as ignorant of fault as of light, with this blind girl who knew but one thing, — that she adored him. But he would have thought it a

theft to take what she might have given; so he resigned himself with a melancholy satisfaction to love angelically, and the knowledge of his deformity imbued him with a proud purity of thought and action.

These happy creatures dwelt in the ideal world. They embraced and caressed each other only in spirit. They had always lived the same life; they knew themselves only in each other's society. The infancy of Dea had coincided with the youth of Gwynplaine; they had grown up side by side. For a long time they had slept in the same bed, for the sleeping accommodations of the van were limited. They slept on the chest; Ursus, on the floor, — that was the arrangement. One day, while Dea was still very young, Gwynplaine felt himself grown up; and it was now that a feeling of shame was first aroused in him. So he said to Ursus, "I too will sleep on the floor;" and at night he stretched himself on the bear-skin beside the old man. Then Dea cried for her bed-fellow; but Gwynplaine, become restless because he had begun to love, insisted upon remaining where he was. From that time he always in cold weather slept by Ursus on the floor. In the summer, when the nights were fine, he slept outside with Homo.

CHAPTER VI.

URSUS AS TUTOR, AND URSUS AS GUARDIAN.

URSUS said to himself, "Some of these days I will play them a mean trick, — I will marry them."

Ursus taught Gwynplaine the theory of love. He said to him: "Do you know how the Almighty lights the fire called love? He places the woman underneath, the devil between, and the man at the top. A match — that is to say, a look — and behold, it is all on fire."

"A look is unnecessary," answered Gwynplaine, thinking of Dea.

And Ursus replied, "Idiot! do souls require mortal eyes to see each other?"

Ursus was a good fellow at times. Gwynplaine, madly in love with Dea, sometimes became melancholy, and made use of the presence of Ursus as a guard on himself. One day Ursus said to him: "Bah! do not put yourself out. When in love, the cock shows himself."

"But the eagle conceals himself," replied Gwynplaine.

At other times Ursus would say to himself apart: "It is well to put some spokes in the wheels of the Cytherean car occasionally. They love each other too much. This may have its disadvantages. Let us avoid too much of a conflagration; let us moderate these raptures."

So Ursus had recourse to warnings of this nature, — speaking to Gwynplaine while Dea slept, and to Dea when Gwynplaine was out of hearing: —

"Dea, you must not be so fond of Gwynplaine. To live only in another is dangerous. Selfishness is the surest foundation for happiness, after all. Men play women false sometimes. Besides, Gwynplaine might end by becoming infatuated with you. His success is very great! You have no idea how great his success is!"

Again: "Gwynplaine, such disparities are unfortunate. So much ugliness on one side and so much beauty on another, ought to cause reflection. Temper your ardour, my boy; do not become too enthusiastic about Dea. Do you seriously consider that you are suited to her? Just think of your deformity and her perfection! See the difference between her and yourself. She has everything, this Dea. What a white skin! What hair! Lips like strawberries! and her foot, her hand! Those shoulders, with their exquisite curve! Her expression too is sublime. She seems to diffuse light around her as she moves; and when she speaks, that grave tone of voice is charming. And in spite of all this, to think that she is a woman! She would not be such a fool as to be an angel. She is a perfect beauty! Keep all this in mind, to calm your ardour."

These speeches only increased the mutual love of Gwynplaine and Dea; and Ursus marvelled at his want of success, like one who might say, "It is singular that with all the oil I throw on the fire, I cannot extinguish it!"

Did Ursus, then, really desire to extinguish their love, or to cool it even? Certainly not. He would have been sorely disappointed had he succeeded. In his secret heart this love delighted him beyond measure. But it is natural to scoff a little at that which charms us; men call it wisdom. Ursus had been, in his relations with Gwynplaine and Dea, almost a father and a

mother. Grumbling all the while, he had brought them up; grumbling all the while, he had nourished them. His adoption of them had made the van harder to draw, and he had been oftener compelled to harness himself by Homo's side to help pull it. We may remark here, however, that after the first few years, when Gwynplaine was nearly grown up and Ursus had grown quite old, Gwynplaine had taken his turn and drawn Ursus.

Ursus, seeing that Gwynplaine was becoming a man, had cast the horoscope. "Your fortune is made," he said to him once, alluding to his disfigurement.

This family of an old man and two children, with a wolf, had become, as they wandered, more and more closely united. Their roving life had not hindered education. "To travel is to grow," Ursus said. Gwynplaine was evidently made to exhibit at fairs. Ursus had cultivated in him feats of dexterity, and had incrusted him with as much of the science and wisdom he himself possessed as possible. Ursus, contemplating the perplexing mask of Gwynplaine's face, often growled, "He has begun well." It was probably for this reason that he had tried to endow him with every ornament of philosophy and wisdom. He repeated constantly to Gwynplaine: —

"Be a philosopher. To be wise is to be invulnerable. You see what I am. I have never shed a tear. This is all the result of my wisdom. Do you think that occasion for tears has been wanting, had I felt disposed to weep?"

Ursus, in one of his monologues in the hearing of the wolf, said: "I have taught Gwynplaine everything, Latin included. I have taught Dea nothing, music included."

Ursus had taught them both to sing. He had himself quite a talent for playing on the oaten reed, a little flute of that period. He played on it very agreeably, as also

on the chiffonie, — a sort of beggar's hurdy-gurdy, mentioned in the Chronicle of Bertrand Duguesclin as the "truant instrument," which started the symphony. These instruments attracted the crowd. Ursus would show them the chiffonie, and say, "It is called *organistrum* in Latin." He had taught Dea and Gwynplaine to sing according to the method of Orpheus and of Egide Binchois. Frequently he interrupted the lessons with enthusiastic cries, such as, "Orpheus, musician of Greece! Binchois, musician of Picardy!" These branches of culture did not occupy the children so much as to prevent their adoring each other. They had mingled their hearts together as they grew up, as two saplings planted near each other mingle their branches as they become trees.

"That is well," said Ursus. "I will have them marry, one of these days." Then he grumbled to himself: "They are quite tiresome with their love."

The past, at least their little past, had no existence for Dea and Gwynplaine. They knew only what Ursus had told them of it. They called Ursus father. The only remembrance which Gwynplaine had of his infancy was as of a passage of demons over his cradle. He had an impression of having been trodden in the darkness under deformed feet. Was this intentional or not? He was ignorant on this point. The one thing that he did remember clearly, even to the slightest detail, were his tragical adventures when deserted at Portland. The finding of Dea made the dismal night a notable date for him.

Dea's recollections were even more confused than those of Gwynplaine. In so young a child all remembrance soon melts away. She recollected her mother as something cold. Had she ever seen the sun? Perhaps so. "The sun! what was it like?" She had a vague

idea of something luminous and warm, of which Gwynplaine now filled the place. They spoke to each other in low tones: it is certain that cooing is the most important thing in the world. Dea often said to Gwynplaine: "Light means that you are speaking."

Once, no longer able to restrain himself as he caught sight of Dea's bare arm through her thin muslin sleeve, Gwynplaine touched the transparent stuff with his lips: ideal kiss of a disfigured mouth! Dea felt a deep delight; she blushed like a rose. This kiss from a monster brought the roseate hues of dawn to gleam on this beautiful brow shrouded in night. Gwynplaine sighed with a sort of terror; but Dea pulled up her sleeve, and extending her naked arm to Gwynplaine, said, "Again!" Gwynplaine fled. The next day the game was renewed, with variations. It was a heavenly subsidence into that sweet abyss called love.

At such things Heaven smiles philosophically.

CHAPTER VII.

BLINDNESS GIVES LESSONS IN CLAIRVOYANCE.

GWYNPLAINE reproached himself at times. He made his happiness a matter of conscience. He fancied that in allowing a woman who could not see him to love him, he was guilty of a gross deception. What would she say if her sight were suddenly restored? How she would shrink from what had previously attracted her! How she would recoil from her frightful lover! What a cry! what covering of her face! what a flight! These bitter scruples harassed him. He told himself that such a monster as he was had no right to love. He was a hydra idolized by a star. It was his duty to enlighten the blind star.

One day Gwynplaine said to Dea, "You know that I am very ugly."

"I know that you are sublime," she answered.

He resumed: "When you hear everybody laugh, it is at me they are laughing, because I am horrible."

"I love you!" said Dea. After a silence, she added: "I was dead; you restored me to life. When you are near me heaven is beside me. Give me your hand, that I may touch heaven."

Their hands met and grasped each other. They spoke no more, but were silent in the plenitude of their love.

Ursus, who was a crabbed old fellow, overheard this. The next day when the three were together, he remarked, "For that matter, Dea is ugly too."

The words produced no effect. Dea and Gwynplaine were not even listening. Absorbed in each other, they rarely heeded the exclamations of Ursus.

The remark, "Dea is ugly too," showed that Ursus possessed considerable knowledge of women. It is certain that Gwynplaine, in his loyalty, had been guilty of an imprudence. To have said "I am ugly" to any other blind girl than Dea might have been dangerous. To be blind, and in love too, is to be doubly blind. In such a situation one indulges in all sorts of dreams. Illusion is the food of dreams. Take illusion from love, and you take from it its aliment. It is compounded of all sorts of enthusiasm, and of both physical and moral admiration.

Moreover, you should never tell a woman anything she cannot understand. She will dream about it, and she often dreams falsely. An enigma in a reverie spoils it. The shock caused by the fall of a careless word displaces that against which it strikes. At times it happens, without our knowing why, that because we have received an almost imperceptible blow from a chance word, the heart insensibly empties itself of love. He who loves, perceives a decline in his happiness. There is nothing more to be dreaded than this slow exudation from the fissure in the vase.

Happily, Dea was not formed of such clay. The stuff of which women are usually made had not been used in her construction. She had a rare nature. The frame was fragile, but not the heart. A divine perseverance in love was one of her attributes. The whole disturbance which the word used by Gwynplaine had created in her, ended in her saying one day, —

"What is it to be ugly? It is to do wrong. Gwynplaine only does good: he is handsome."

Then, under the form of interrogation so familiar to children and to the blind, Dea resumed: "Too see? —

what is it that you call seeing? For my own part, I cannot see; I know! It seems that *to see* means *to hide.*"

"What do you mean?" said Gwynplaine.

Dea answered: "To see is a thing which conceals the true."

"No," said Gwynplaine.

"But, yes," replied Dea, "since you say you are ugly."

She reflected a moment, and then exclaimed fondly, "Oh, you story-teller!"

Gwynplaine felt the joy of having confessed and of not being believed. Both his conscience and his love were consoled.

Dea was now sixteen, and Gwynplaine nearly twenty-five. A sort of holy childhood had continued in their love. Thus it sometimes happens that the belated nightingale prolongs her nocturnal song till dawn. Their caresses went no further than pressing hands, or lips brushing a naked arm. Soft, half articulate whispers sufficed them.

Twenty-four and sixteen! So it happened that Ursus, who did not lose sight of the ill-turn he intended to do them, said, —

"One of these days you must choose a religion."

"Wherefore?" inquired Gwynplaine.

"That you may marry."

"That is done already," said Dea.

Dea did not understand that they could be more man and wife than they were already. This chimerical and virginal content, this chaste union of souls, this celibacy taken for marriage, was not displeasing to Ursus. He had said what he had said because he thought it necessary; but the medical knowledge he possessed convinced him that Dea, if not too young, was too fragile and delicate for what he called "Hymen in flesh and

bone." That would come soon enough. Besides, were they not already married? If the indissoluble existed anywhere, was it not in their union? Gwynplaine and Dea, — they were creatures worthy of the love they mutually felt, flung by misfortune into each other's arms. And as if they were not enough in this first link, love had supervened and united them yet more closely. What power could ever break that iron chain, bound with knots of flowers? They were indeed indissolubly united. Dea had beauty, Gwynplaine had sight. Each brought a dowry. They were more than coupled, they were paired; separated solely by the sacred interposition of innocence.

Still, in spite of all Gwynplaine's noble dreams and his absorbing love for Dea, he was a man. The laws of Nature are not to be evaded. He underwent, like everything else in the natural world, the mysterious fermentation ordained by the Creator. At times, therefore, he looked at the women in the crowd, but he immediately felt that the look was a sin, and hastened to retire, repentant, into his own soul. Let us add that he met with no encouragement. On the face of every woman who looked upon him, he saw aversion, antipathy, repugnance, and scorn. It was evident that no one save Dea was possible for him. This probably helped him to repent.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOT ONLY HAPPINESS, BUT PROSPERITY.

HOW many true things are told in stories! The burn of the invisible fiend who touches you is remorse for a wicked thought.

In Gwynplaine these evil thoughts never came to fruition; so he felt no remorse. Sometimes he felt regret. A few vague compunctions of conscience, what was that? Nothing. Their happiness was complete; so complete, that they were no longer poor, even.

From 1689 to 1704 a great change had taken place. It sometimes happened, in the year 1704 that an immense van drawn by two sturdy horses made its appearance about nightfall in some small village on the sea-coast. This van resembled the hull of a vessel turned upside down, the keel serving for a roof, and the deck, placed upon four wheels, for a floor. The wheels were all of the same size, and as high as wagon-wheels. Wheels, pole, and van were all painted green, with a rhythmical gradation of shades, which ranged from bottle-green for the wheels, to apple-green for the roofing. This colour attracted attention to the establishment, which was known on all fair-grounds as The Green Box. The Green Box had but two windows, one at each end, and at the back there was a door with steps that let down. On the roof, from a pipe painted green like the rest, smoke arose. This moving house was always newly varnished and washed. In front, on a sort of platform, fastened to the

van, behind the horses, and beside an old man who held the reins and guided the team, two gipsy women, dressed as goddesses, sounded their trumpets. The wonder with which the villagers regarded this gorgeous establishment was overwhelming.

This was the old van of Ursus, with its proportions augmented by success, and changed from a wretched box into a fine travelling show. A kind of animal, between dog and wolf, was chained under the van; this was Homo. The old coachman who drove the horses was the philosopher himself. Whence came his improvement from the shabby box to the Olympic caravan? From this, — Gwynplaine had become famous.

It was with a correct idea of what would succeed best among men that Ursus had said to Gwynplaine: "Your fortune is made." Ursus, it may be remembered, had made Gwynplaine his pupil. Unknown people had worked upon his face; he, on the other hand, had worked upon his mind; and as soon as the growth of the child warranted it, he had brought him out on the stage, — that is to say, he had produced him in front of the van.

The effect of Gwynplaine's appearance had been surprising. The passers-by were immediately struck with wonder. Never had anything been seen to be compared to this extraordinary imitation of laughter. They were ignorant how the miracle of infectious hilarity had been obtained. Some believed it to be natural, others declared it to be artificial; and all these conjectures added to the reality; so that everywhere, at every cross-road on the journey, at all the fair-grounds and *fêtes*, crowds rushed to see Gwynplaine. Thanks to this great attraction, there had come into the poor purse of the wanderers first a shower of farthings, then of pennies, and finally of shillings. The curiosity of one place satisfied, they passed on to another. Rolling does not enrich a

stone, but it enriches a caravan; and year by year, from city to city, with the increased growth of Gwynplaine's stature and ugliness, the good fortune predicted by Ursus had come.

"What a good turn they did you after all, my boy," said Ursus.

This good fortune enabled Ursus, who acted as business manager to have the chariot of his dreams constructed,— that is to say, a caravan large enough to carry a theatre, and thus sow science and art in the highways. Moreover, Ursus had been able to add to the troupe composed of himself, Homo, Gwynplaine, and Dea, two horses and two women, who were the goddesses of the troupe, as we have just said, and also its servants. A mythological frontispiece was, in those days, of great service to a travelling show.

"We are a wandering temple," said Ursus.

These two gipsies, picked up by the philosopher from among the vagabondage of cities and suburbs, were ugly and young, and were called, by order of Ursus, one Phœbe, and the other Venus. For these read Fibi and Vinos, that we may conform to English pronunciation. Phœbe cooked; Venus scrubbed the temple. Moreover, on days of performance they dressed Dea. Mountebanks have to appear in public as well as princes; and on these occasions Dea was arrayed, like Fibi, and Vinos, in a Florentine petticoat of flowered stuff, and a woman's jacket, which, having no sleeves, left the arms bare. Ursus and Gwynplaine wore men's jackets and long loose trousers, like sailors on board a man-of-war. Gwynplaine had, besides, for his work and for his feats of strength, round his neck and over his shoulders, a leather esclavine. He took care of the horses. Ursus and Homo took care of each other.

Dea, being used to the Green Box, moved about the

interior of the wheeled house with almost as much ease and safety as a person who could see. In the back part of this new and imposing establishment, in the corner to the right of the door, stood the old van, securely fastened to the floor. This now served as a sleeping apartment and dressing-room for Gwynplaine and Ursus. In the opposite corner was the kitchen.

No vessel could be more precise and compact in its arrangements than the interior of the Green Box. Everything connected with it had been planned with remarkable foresight and care. The caravan was divided into three compartments, partitioned off from one another. These communicated by open spaces without doors, but were hung with curtains. The compartment in the rear belonged to the men, the compartment in front to the women, the compartment in the middle, separating the two sexes, was the stage. The musical instruments and the stage properties were kept in the kitchen. A loft under the arch of the roof held the scenery, and on opening a trap-door lamps appeared, which did wonders in the way of lighting the stage!

Ursus was the poet of these representations; he wrote the pieces. He had a diversity of talents; he was clever at sleight-of-hand. Besides the voices he imitated, he produced all sorts of unexpected effects, — sudden alternations of light and darkness, spontaneous formations of figures or words, — as he willed, on the wall; also vanishing figures in *chiaroscuro*, wonders amidst which he seemed to meditate, unmindful of the crowd who marvelled at him.

One day Gwynplaine said to him: "Father, you look like a sorcerer!"

And Ursus replied, "Then I look, perhaps, like what I am."

The Green Box, built on a model conceived by Ursus,

contained this stroke of ingenuity: between the fore and hind wheels, the central panel of the left side turned on hinges by the aid of chains and pulleys, and could be let down at will like a drawbridge. As it dropped, it set at liberty three legs also on hinges, which supported the panel and converted it into a sort of platform. The opening thus made disclosed the stage, which was enlarged by the platform in front. This opening looked for all the world like a "mouth of hell," in the words of the itinerant Puritan preachers, who turned away from it with horror. It was, perhaps, for some such impious invention that Solon kicked out Thespis.

For all that, Thespis has lasted much longer than is generally supposed. The travelling theatre is still in existence. It was on these stages on wheels that the ballets and dances of Amner and Pilkington were performed in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the pastorals of Gilbert Colin in France; and in Flanders, at the annual fairs, the double choruses of Clement, called Non Papa; in Germany, the "Adam and Eve" of Theiles; and, in Italy, the Venetian exhibitions of Animuccia and of Ca-Fossis, the "Silvæ" of Gesualdo, prince of Venosa, the "Satyr," of Laura Guidiccioni, the "Despair of Philene," and the "Death of Ugolino," by Vincent Galileo, father of the astronomer, in which Vincent Galileo sang his own music, and accompanied himself on his viol de gamba; as well as all the first attempts of the Italian opera, which, from 1580, substituted free inspiration for the madrigal style.

The chariot, which carried Ursus, Gwynplaine, and their fortunes, and in front of which Fibi and Vinos trumpeted like figures of Fame, played its part in this great Bohemian and literary brotherhood. Thespis would no more have disowned Ursus, than Congrio would have disowned Gwynplaine.

On arriving at open spaces in towns or villages, Ursus, in the intervals between the tootings of Fibi and Vinos, gave instructive explanations concerning the trumpetings. "This symphony is Gregorian," he would exclaim, "citizens and townsmen; the Gregorian form of worship, this great progress, has had to contend in Italy with the Ambrosial ritual, and in Spain with the Mozarabic ceremonial, and has achieved its triumph over them with difficulty." After which the Green Box drew up in some place chosen by Ursus, and evening having come, and the panel stage having been let down, the theatre opened and the performance began.

The scenery of the Green Box represented a landscape, painted by Ursus; and as he knew nothing about painting, it could, if need be, represent a cave just as well as a landscape. The curtain was quite a gorgeous silk affair, with large plaids of contrasting colours.

The public stood outside, in the street, forming a semicircle round the stage, exposed to the wind and weather, — an arrangement which made rain even less desirable for theatres in those days than now. When they could, they acted in an inn yard, on which occasions the windows of the different stories served as boxes for the spectators. The theatre being better protected, the audience was a better paying one.

Ursus was everywhere, — in the piece, in the company, in the kitchen, in the orchestra. Vinos beat the drum, handling the sticks with great dexterity. Fibi played on the *morache*, a kind of guitar. The wolf had been promoted to be a utility gentleman, and played his little parts as occasion required. Often when they appeared side by side on the stage, Ursus in his tightly laced bear's skin, Homo with his wolf's skin fitting still better, one could hardly tell which was the beast. This flattered Ursus.

CHAPTER IX.

ABSURDITIES WHICH FOLKS WITHOUT TASTE CALL POETRY.

THE pieces written by Ursus were interludes, —a kind of composition out of fashion nowadays. One of these pieces, which has not come down to us, was entitled "Ursus Rursus." It is probable that he played the principal part himself. A pretended exit, followed by a reappearance, was doubtless its praiseworthy and edifying subject.

The titles of the interludes of Ursus were sometimes in Latin, as we have seen, and the poetry frequently in Spanish. The Spanish verses written by Ursus were rhymed, like nearly all the Castilian poetry of that period. This did not puzzle the people. Spanish was then a familiar language; and the English sailor spoke Castilian as the Roman sailors spoke Carthaginian (See Plautus). Moreover, at a theatrical representation, as at Mass, Latin, or any other unknown language, has no terrors for the audience. They get out of the dilemma by adapting familiar words to the sounds. Our old Gallic France was often treated in this irreverent way. At church, under cover of an *Immolatus*, the faithful chanted, "I will make merry;" and under a *Sanctus*, "Kiss me, sweet." The Council of Trent was required to put an end to this sacrilege.

Ursus had composed expressly for Gwynplaine an interlude, with which he was well pleased. It was his

best work. He had thrown his whole soul into it. To give one's entire talent in the production is the greatest triumph that any one can achieve. The toad which produces a toad achieves a grand success. You doubt it? Then try it yourself. Ursus had carefully polished this interlude. This bear's cub was entitled "Chaos Vanquished."

Here it was. A night scene. When the curtain drew up, the crowd, massed around the Green Box, saw nothing but intense darkness. In this darkness three shadowy forms were moving about, — a wolf, a bear, and a man. The wolf acted the wolf; Ursus, the bear; Gwynplaine, the man. The wolf and the bear represented the ferocious forces of Nature, — unreasoning hunger and savage ignorance. Both rushed on Gwynplaine. It was chaos combating man. No face could be distinguished. Gwynplaine fought enfolded in a winding-sheet, his face being covered by his thickly falling locks. All else was shadow. The bear growled, the wolf gnashed his teeth, the man cried out. The man was down; the beasts overwhelmed him. He called for aid and succour; he shrieked out an agonized appeal to the Unknown. He gave a death-rattle. To witness this agony of the prostrate man, now scarcely distinguishable from the brutes, was appalling. The crowd looked on breathless; in a minute more the wild beasts would triumph, and chaos re-absorb man. A struggle — cries — howlings; then, all at once, silence.

A song in the distance. Mysterious music floated out, accompanying this chant of invisible spirits; and suddenly, none knowing whence or how, a white apparition arose. This apparition was a light; this light was a woman; this woman was a spirit. Dea — calm, fair, beautiful, awe-inspiring in her serenity and sweetness — appeared in the centre of a luminous haze, the very spirit of dawn. With a voice light, sweet, indescribable,

she sang in the new-born light, — she, the invisible, suddenly made visible. They thought that they heard the hymn of an angel or the song of a bird. On beholding this apparition the man, starting up in ecstasy, struck the beasts with his fists, and overthrew them.

Then the vision, gliding along in a manner difficult to understand, and therefore the more admired, sang these words in sufficiently pure Spanish for the English sailors who were present: —

"Ora! llora!
De palabra
Nace razon.
Da luz el son." [1]

Then, looking down, as if she saw a gulf beneath, she went on: —

"Noche, quita te de alli!
El alba canta hallali." [2]

As she sang, the man raised himself by degrees; instead of crouching he was now kneeling, his hands elevated towards the vision, his knees resting on the beasts, which lay motionless, as if petrified. Turning towards him, she continued, —

"Es menester a cielos ir,
Y tu que llorabas reir." [3]

Then approaching him with the majesty of a star, she added, —

"Gebra barzon;
Deja, monstro,
A tu negro
Caparazon." [4]

And placed her hand upon his brow. Then another voice arose, deeper, and, consequently, still sweeter, —

[1] Pray! weep! Reason is born of the word. Song creates light.
[2] Night, away! the dawn sings hallali.
[3] Thou must go to heaven, and smile, thou that weepest.
[4] Break the yoke; throw off, monster, thy dark clothing.

a voice broken but inwrapt in a gravity both wild and tender. It was the human voice responding to the voice of the stars. Gwynplaine, still in obscurity, his head under Dea's hand, kneeling on the vanquished bear and wolf, sang: —

"O ven! ama!
Eres alma,
Soy corazon." [1]

Suddenly from the shadow a glare of light fell full upon Gwynplaine. Then, through the darkness, the monster was fully exposed.

The excitement of the crowd was indescribable. Shrieks of laughter resounded. Mirth is created by startling surprises, and nothing could be more unexpected than this termination. Never was there a sensation comparable to that produced by the ray of light falling on that mask, at once so ludicrous and terrible in its aspect. They laughed on account of his laugh. Everywhere: above, below, behind, in front, at the uttermost distance, — men, women, old grey-heads, rosy-faced children; the good, the wicked, the gay, the sad, everybody. And even in the streets, the passers-by who could see nothing, hearing the laughter, laughed also. The laughter ended in a wild clapping of hands and stamping of feet. The curtain dropped, Gwynplaine was recalled with frenzy. Hence an immense success. Have you seen "Chaos Vanquished"? Gwynplaine became the rage. The listless came to laugh, the melancholy came to laugh, evil consciences came to laugh, — a laugh so irrisistible that it seemed almost an epidemic. There is one epidemic from which men do not fly, and that is the contagion of joy.

Gwynplaine's successes, it must be admitted, had not extended beyond the lower classes. A great crowd

[1] O, come, and love! thou art soul, I am heart.

means a crowd of nobodies. "Chaos Vanquished" could be seen for a penny. Fashionable people never go where the price of admission is a penny.

Ursus had a very exalted opinion of this work, which he had brooded over a long time. "It is very much in the style of one Shakspeare," he said modestly. The juxtaposition of Dea added to the indescribable effect produced by Gwynplaine. Her white face by the side of the gnome, represented what might have been called divine astonishment. The audience regarded Dea with a sort of mysterious anxiety. She had in her aspect the dignity of a virgin and of a priestess. They saw that she was blind, and yet felt that she could see. She seemed to stand on the threshold of the supernatural. The light that beamed on her seemed half earthly and half heavenly. She had come to work on earth, and to work as heaven works, in the radiance of morning. She found a hydra, and created a soul. She seemed like a creative power, satisfied, but astonished at the result of her creation; and the audience fancied that they could see in the divine surprise of her face wonder at the result she had achieved. They felt that she loved this monster. Did she know that he was one? Yes, since she touched him; no, since she accepted him. Without going too deep, for spectators do not like the fatigue of seeking below the surface, something more was understood than was perceived. And this strange spectacle had the transparency of an avatar.

As for Dea, what she felt cannot be expressed in human words; she knew that she was in the midst of a crowd, and yet knew not what a crowd was. She heard a murmur, that was all. For her the crowd was but a breath. Generations are passing breaths. Man respires, aspires, and expires. In the crowd Dea felt utterly alone, and shuddered as one shudders on the edge of a

precipice. Suddenly, even while shuddering at her isolation, she regains confidence. She has found her thread of safety in the universe of shadows, — she has placed her hand on Gwynplaine's powerful head. Joy unspeakable fills her heart as she lays her rosy fingers on his thick locks. Wool when touched gives an impression of softness. Dea touched a lamb which she knew to be a lion. Her whole heart flowed out in love ineffable. She felt safe now, she had found her saviour. The public believed that they saw the contrary. To the spectators the being loved was Gwynplaine, and the saviour was Dea. "What does it matter?" thought Ursus, to whom the heart of Dea was an open book. And Dea, reassured, consoled, and delighted, adored as an angel what the people regarded as a monster.

True love never wanes. Being all soul it cannot cool. A brazier may become full of cinders; not so a star. These exquisite impressions were renewed every evening for Dea, and she was ready to weep with tenderness whilst the audience was in convulsions of laughter. Those around her were only joyful; she was happy.

The sensation of gaiety due to the sudden shock caused by the sight of Gwynplaine was evidently not intended by Ursus. He would have preferred more smiles and less laughter, and more of a literary triumph. But success consoles. He reconciled himself to this disappointment every evening, as he counted how many shillings the piles of farthings made, and how many pounds the piles of shillings made. He consoled himself, too, with the belief that after their laughter was over, "Chaos Vanquished" would continue to haunt them by reason of the noble sentiments it inculcated. Perhaps he was not altogether wrong; the foundations of a work settle down in the mind of the public. The fact is, the spectators, attentive to the wolf, the bear,

to the man, then to the music, to the howlings silenced by harmony, to the night dispelled by dawn, to the chant releasing the light, accepted with a confused, dull sympathy, and with a certain emotional respect, the dramatic poem of "Chaos Vanquished," the victory of spirit over matter, ending with the triumph of man.

Such were the vulgar pleasures of the people. They sufficed them. The people had not the means of going to the elevating prize-fights of the gentry, and could not bet a thousand guineas on Helmsgail against Phelem-ghe-Madone, like great lords and gentlemen.

CHAPTER X.

AN OUTSIDER'S VIEW OF MEN AND THINGS.

MAN has a desire to revenge himself on that which pleases him. Hence the contempt felt for the comedian. This being charms, diverts, distracts, teaches, enchants, consoles me, transports me into an ideal world, is agreeable and useful to me. What evil can I do him in return? Humiliate him. Disdain is a crushing blow, so I will crush him with disdain. He amuses me, therefore he is vile. He serves me, therefore I hate him. Where can I find a stone to throw at him? Priest, give me yours. Philosopher, give me yours. Bossuet, excommunicate him. Rousseau, insult him. Orator, spit the pebbles from your mouth at him. Bear, fling your stone. Let us hurl stones at the tree, hit the fruit and eat it. Bravo! down with him! To repeat poetry is to be infected with the plague. Wretched play-actor! we will put him in the pillory for his success. Let him follow up his triumph with our hisses. Let him collect a crowd, and yet create a solitude around him. Thus it is that the wealthy, termed the higher classes, have invented for the actor that form of isolation known as public applause.

The vulgar herd is less brutal. They neither hated nor despised Gwynplaine. Only the meanest calker of the meanest crew of the meanest merchantman, anchored in the meanest English sea-port, considered himself immeasurably superior to this amuser of the "scum,"

and believed that a calker is as superior to an actor as a lord is to a calker. Gwynplaine was, therefore, like all comedians, applauded and kept at a distance. Truly, success in this world is a crime, and must be bitterly expiated. He who obtains the medal has to take its reverse side as well.

For Gwynplaine there was no reverse side. In one sense, both sides of his medal pleased him. He was satisfied with the applause, and content with the isolation. In applause, he was rich; in isolation, happy. To be rich, to one of his low estate, means to be no longer wretchedly poor, to have neither holes in his clothes nor cold at his hearth, nor emptiness in his stomach. It is to eat when hungry, and drink when thirsty. It is to have everything needful, including a penny for a beggar. This paltry wealth, enough for liberty, Gwynplaine now possessed. So far as his soul was concerned, he was opulent. He had love. What more could he want? Nothing.

You may think that, had the offer been made to him to cure his disfigurement, he would have jumped at it. But he would have refused it emphatically. What! to throw off his mask and have his former face restored, to be the creature he had perchance been created, handsome and charming? No, he would not have consented to it. For what would he have to support Dea upon? what would have become of the poor child, the sweet blind girl who loved him? Without his disfigurement, making him a clown without parallel, he would have been a common mountebank, like any other; a common athlete, a picker up of pence from the chinks in the pavement, and Dea would, perhaps, not have had bread to eat. It was with deep and tender pride that he felt himself the protector of the helpless and heavenly creature. Night, solitude, nakedness, weakness, ignorance,

hunger, and thirst — the seven dread jaws of poverty — yawned about her, and he was Saint George fighting the dragon. He triumphed over poverty. How? By his deformity. By means of his deformity he was useful, helpful, victorious, great! He had but to show himself, and money poured in. He was a master of crowds, the sovereign of the mob. He could do everything for Dea. He supplied her every want; her desires, her tastes, her fancies, — in the limited sphere in which wishes are possible to the blind, — he gratified.

Gwynplaine and Dea had been, as we have already shown, a Providence to each other. He felt himself raised on her wings, she felt herself carried in his arms. To protect the being who loves you, to give what she requires to her who shines on you as your star, can anything be sweeter? Gwynplaine possessed this supreme happiness, and he owed it to his deformity. By it he had gained the means of livelihood for himself and others; by it he had gained independence, liberty, celebrity, internal satisfaction, and pride. In his deformity he was invulnerable. The Fates could do nothing beyond this blow in which they had expended their whole force, but which he had converted into a triumph. This greatest of misfortunes had become the summit of Elysium. Gwynplaine was imprisoned in his deformity, — but with Dea. And this was, as we have already said, to live in a dungeon in paradise. A wall stood between them and the living world. So much the better. This wall protected as well as enclosed them. What could harm Dea, what could harm Gwynplaine, with such a fortress around them? To deprive him of his success was impossible. They would have to deprive him of his face. Take his love from him? Impossible! Dea could not see him. The blindness of Dea was divinely incurable. What harm did his deformity do Gwyn-

plaine? None. What advantage did it give him? Every advantage. He was beloved, notwithstanding its horror, and, perhaps, for that very reason. Infirmity and deformity had, by instinct, been drawn towards and united with each other. To be beloved, is not that everything? Gwynplaine thought of his disfigurement only with gratitude. He was blessed in the stigma. With joy he felt that it was irremediable and eternal. What a blessing that it was so! While there were highways and fair-grounds, and journeys to take, and people below, and the sky above, they were sure of a living. Dea would want for nothing, and they would have love.

Gwynplaine would not have changed faces with Apollo. To be a monster was his happiness. He was so happy that he felt compassion for the men around him. He pitied all the rest of the world. No man's nature is wholly consistent; so, although he was glad to live within an enclosure, he lifted his head above the wall from time to time, but only to retreat again with even more joy into his solitude with Dea, having drawn his comparisons. What did he see around him? What were those living creatures of which his wandering life showed him so many specimens, changed every day? Always new crowds, but always the same multitude; ever new faces, but ever the same misfortunes. Every evening every known phase of human misery came within his notice.

The Green Box was popular. Low prices attract the low classes. Those who came were the weak, the poor, the insignificant. They rushed to Gwynplaine as they rushed to the gin-shop. They came to buy a pennyworth of forgetfulness. From his platform Gwynplaine passed these wretched people in review. His mind was absorbed in the contemplation of each successive form of wide-spread misery. The physiognomy of a man is moulded by conscience, and by the tenor of his life, and

the result is a host of mysterious excavations. There was not a pain nor an emotion of anger, shame, or despair, of which Gwynplaine did not see the trace. The mouths of those children were hungering for food. That man was a father, that woman a mother, and behind them might be seen families on the road to ruin. There was a face already marked by vice and contact with crime, and the reasons were plain, — ignorance and poverty. Another showed the stamp of original goodness, obliterated by social pressure, and turned to hatred. On the face of an old woman he saw starvation; on that of a girl, prostitution. The same fact, and although the girl had the resource of her youth, all the sadder for that! In this crowd were hands but no tools; the workers only asked for work, but work was wanting. Sometimes a soldier came and seated himself by the workmen, sometimes a wounded pensioner; and Gwynplaine saw the grim spectre of war. Here, he read lack of employment, there, man-farming, — slavery. On some brows he saw a gradual return to animalism, — that slow return of man to beast, produced in those in the lower walks of life by the good fortune of their superiors.

There was a break in the gloom for Gwynplaine. He and Dea had a loop-hole of happiness; the rest was damnation. Gwynplaine saw above him the thoughtless trampling of the powerful, the rich, the magnificent, and the great of the earth. Below, he saw the pale faces of the disinherited. He saw himself and Dea, with their blessings, so paltry in appearance, so great to themselves, between these two worlds. That which was above went and came, free, joyous, dancing, carelessly trampling everything and everybody under foot; above him, the world which treads; below, the world which is trodden upon. It is a fatal fact, and one indicating a profound social evil, that happiness should crush misery. Gwynplaine comprehended this gloomy fact thoroughly. What

a destiny! Must a man needs drag himself along through mire and corruption, with such vicious tastes, such a total abdication of his rights, or such abjectness that one feels inclined to crush him under foot? Of what butterfly can this earthly life be grub? What! in this vast crowd of ignorant, starving creatures, scarcely able to distinguish good from evil, — the inflexibility of human laws producing marvellous laxity of conscience, — is there no child that grows but to be stunted, no virgin that matures but for sin, no rose that blooms but for the slimy snail?

Gwynplaine shuddered as he saw the foaming wave of misery dash over the crowd of humanity. He himself was safe in port, as he watched the wrecks around him. Sometimes he buried his disfigured head in his hands and dreamed. What folly to expect to be happy! What an idle dream! Strange ideas arose within him. Absurd notions flitted through his brain. Because he had once succoured an infant, he felt a ridiculous desire to succour the whole world. The mists of reverie sometimes obscured his individuality, and he lost all ideas of proportion so far as to ask himself the question, "What can be done for the poor?" Sometimes he was so absorbed in the subject that he unconsciously uttered his thoughts aloud. Ursus shrugged his shoulders and looked at him wonderingly.

"Oh, if I were powerful, would I not aid the wretched?" Gwynplaine would exclaim, continuing his reverie. But what am I? — A mere atom. What can I do? — Nothing."

He was mistaken. He was able to do a great deal for the wretched. He could make them laugh; and, as we have said before, to make people laugh is to make them forget. What a benefactor to humanity is he who can bestow forgetfulness!

CHAPTER XI.

GWYNPLAINE THINKS JUSTICE, AND URSUS SPEAKS TRUTH.

A PHILOSOPHER is a spy; so it was only natural that Ursus should watch his pupil closely. Our soliloquies leave on our brows a faint reflection, distinguishable to the eye of a physiognomist. Hence, the ideas that occurred to Gwynplaine did not escape Ursus. One day as Gwynplaine was meditating, Ursus took him by the jacket, and exclaimed, —

"You strike me as being a close observer! You fool! Take care. It is no business of yours. You have only one thing to do, — to love Dea. You have two great causes for thankfulness, — the first is, that the crowd sees your face; the second is, that Dea does not. You have no right to the happiness you possess, for no woman who saw your mouth would ever consent to your kiss; and the mouth which has made your fortune, and the face which has given you riches, are not your own. You were not born with that countenance. It was borrowed from the grimace which lurks in the depths of perdition. You have stolen your mask from the devil. You are hideous; be satisfied with having drawn that prize in the lottery of life. There are in this world (and a very good thing it is too) the happy by right, and the happy by luck. You are happy by luck. You are in a cave wherein a star is enclosed. The poor star belongs to you. Do not seek to leave the

cave; and guard your star, O spider! You have Venus in your web. Do me the favour to be satisfied. I see your dreams are troubled. It is idiotic of you. Listen, I am going to speak to you in the language of true poetry. Let Dea eat beefsteaks and mutton-chops, and in six months she will be as strong as a Turk; marry her immediately, give her a child, two children, three children, a long string of children. That is what I call philosophy. Moreover, it is happiness, which is no folly. To have children is a glimpse of heaven. Have brats: blow their noses, spank them, wash them, and put them to bed. Let them swarm about you. If they laugh, it is well; if they howl, it is better, — crying is healthy. Watch them suck at six months, crawl at a year, walk at two, grow tall at fifteen, fall in love at twenty. He who has these joys has everything. For myself, I lacked the privilege, and that is the reason why I am such a brute. God, a composer of beautiful poems and the first of men of letters, said to his fellow-workman, Moses, 'Increase and multiply.' Such is the text. So multiply, you beast! As for the world, it is as it is; you cannot make nor mar it. Do not trouble yourself about it. Pay no attention to what goes on outside. A comedian is made to be looked at, not to look. Do you know what there is outside? The happy, by right. You, I repeat, are one of the happy by chance. You are the pickpocket of the happiness of which they are the rightful proprietors. They are the legitimate possessors; you are an interloper. You live in concubinage with luck. What do you want that you have not already? Shibboleth help me! This fellow is a rascal. Such happiness is a swindle. Those who possess happiness by right do not like folks below them to have so much enjoyment. If they ask you what right you have to be happy, you will not know what to an-

swer. You have no patent, and they have. Jupiter, Allah, Vishnou, Sabaoth, it matters not who, has given them the passport to happiness. Beware of them. Do not meddle with them, lest they should meddle with you. Wretch! do you know what the man is who is happy by right? He is a terrible being. He is a lord. A lord! He must have intrigued pretty well in the devil's unknown country before he was born, to enter life by the door he did. How difficult it must have been to him to be born! It is the only trouble he has given himself; but, just Heaven! what a one! — to bribe destiny, that egregious blockhead, to mark him in his cradle a master of men; to bribe the box-keeper to give him the best place at the show. Read the memoranda in the old van which I have placed on the half-pay list. Read that breviary of wisdom, and you will see what it is to be a lord. A lord is one who has all, and is all. A lord is one who lives far above his own nature. A lord is one who has when young the rights of an old man; when old, the success in intrigue of a young one; if vicious, the homage of respectable people; if a coward, the command of brave men; if a do-nothing, the fruits of labour; if ignorant, the diploma of Cambridge or Oxford; if a fool, the admiration of poets; if ugly, the smiles of women; if a Thersites, the helm of Achilles; if a hare, the skin of a lion. Do not misunderstand my words. I do not say that a lord must necessarily be ignorant, or a coward, or ugly, or stupid, or old. I only mean that he may be all those things without any detriment to himself. On the contrary. Lords are princes. The King of England is only a lord, the first peer of the peerage; that is all, but it is much. Kings were formerly called lords, — the Lord of Denmark, the Lord of Ireland, the Lord of the Isles. The Lord of Norway was first called king three hundred years ago.

Lucius, the most ancient king in England, was addressed by Saint Telesphorus as my Lord Lucius. The lords are peers — that is to say, equals — of whom? Of the king. I do not make the mistake of confounding the lords with parliament. The assembly of the people which the Saxons before the Conquest called *wittenagemote*, the Normans, after the Conquest, entitled *parliamentum*. By degrees the people were turned out. The king's letters convoking the Commons, addressed formerly *ad concilium impendendum*, are now addressed *ad consentiendum*. They have the privilege of saying "Yes." But the peers have the right to say "No;" and the proof is that they have said it. The peers can cut off the king's head. The people cannot. The stroke of the hatchet which decapitated Charles I. is an encroachment, not on the king, but on the peers; and it was well to place on the gibbet the carcass of Cromwell. The lords have power. Why? Because they have the property. Glance over the leaves of the Doomsday-book. That is proof that the lords own England. It is the registry of the estates of subjects, compiled under William the Conqueror; and it is in the charge of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. To copy anything in it, you have to pay twopence a line. It is a fine book! Do you know that I was once physician to a lord who was called Marmaduke, and who had thirty-six thousand a year? Think of that, you hideous idiot! Do you know that, with rabbits from the warrens of Earl Lindsay only, they could feed all the riff-raff of the Cinque Ports? And the good order kept! Every poacher is hung. For two long, furry ears sticking out of a game-bag, I saw the father of six children hanging on the gibbet. Such is the peerage. The rabbit of a great lord is of more importance than God's image in a man. Lords exist, you see, you rascal! and we must think it well that they do. Even if we do not, what harm

will it do them? The people object, indeed! Why? Plautus himself would never have entertained such an absurd idea. A philosopher would be thought jesting if he advised a poor devil of the masses to cry out against the size and weight of the lords. As well might the gnat dispute with the foot of an elephant. One day I saw a hippopotamus tread upon a mole-hill; he crushed it utterly. He was innocent. The great soft-headed fool of a mastodon was not even aware of the mole's existence. My son, the down-trodden moles are the human race. To crush is the universal law. And do you think that the mole himself crushes nothing? Why, he is the mastodon of the flesh-worm, who in turn is the mastodon of the globe-worm.

"But let us cease arguing. My boy, there are coaches in the world; my lord is inside, the people under the wheels; the philosopher gets out of the way. Stand aside, and let them pass. As for me, I love lords, and yet shun them. I lived with one; the charm of the recollection suffices me. I remember his country house; it would be impossible to conceive of anything more grand and beautiful than Marmaduke Lodge and its surroundings. The houses, country seats, and palaces of the lords form a collection of all that is greatest and most magnificent in this flourishing kingdom. I love our lords. I am grateful to them for being opulent, powerful, and prosperous. I myself am clothed in shadow, so I look with interest upon the shred of heavenly blue which is called a lord. You enter Marmaduke Lodge by an exceedingly spacious courtyard, which forms an oblong square, divided into eight spaces, each surrounded by a balustrade; on each side is a wide approach, and a superb hexagonal fountain plays in the midst; this fountain is formed of two basins, which are surmounted by a dome of exquisite open-work, elevated

on six columns. It was there that I knew a learned Frenchman, Monsieur l'Abbé du Cros, who belonged to the Jacobin monastery in the Rue Saint Jacques. Half the library of Erpenius is at Marmaduke Lodge, the other half is in the theological schools at Cambridge. I used to read the books, seated under the richly ornamented portal. These things are only shown to a select number of curious travellers. Do you know, you ridiculous boy, that William North, who is Lord Grey of Rolleston, and sits fourteenth on the bench of Barons, has more forest trees on his mountains than you have hairs on your horrible noddle? Do you know that Lord Norreys of Rycote, who is Earl of Abingdon, has a square keep a hundred feet high, having this device: *Virtus ariete fortior;* which you would think meant that virtue is stronger than a ram, but which really means, you idiot, that courage is stronger than a battering-machine. Yes, I honour, accept, respect, and revere our lords. It is the lords who, with her royal Majesty, labour to ensure and preserve the welfare of the nation. Their consummate wisdom shines in critical junctures. Their precedence over others I wish they had not; but they have it. What is called principality in Germany and grandeeship in Spain, is called peerage in England and France. There being a fair show of reason for considering the world a wretched place, Heaven felt where the burden was most galling, and to prove that it knew how to make happy people, created lords for the satisfaction of philosophers. This acts as a set-off, and gets Heaven out of the scrape, affording it a decent escape from a false position. The great are great. A peer, speaking of himself, says "We." A peer is a plural. The king calls the peer *consanguinei nostri.* The peers have made a multitude of wise laws; among others, one which condemns to death any one who cuts down a

three-year-old poplar tree. Their supremacy is such that they have a language of their own. In heraldic style, black, which is called *sable* for gentry, is called *saturne* for princes, and *diamond* for peers. Diamond powder! a night thick with stars, such is the night of the happy! Even among themselves these high and mighty lords have their distinctions. A baron cannot bathe with a viscount without his permission. These are indeed excellent safeguards for the nation. What a fine thing it is for the people to have twenty-five dukes, five marquises, seventy-six earls, nine viscounts, and sixty-one barons; making altogether a hundred and seventy-six peers, some of whom are "your grace," and some "my lord." What matter a few rags here and there; everybody cannot be dressed in cloth of gold. Let the rags be. Can you not gaze on the purple? One counterbalances the other. Of course, there are the poor; what of them? They are made to add to the comfort of the opulent. Devil take it! our lords are our glory! The pack of hounds belonging to Charles, Baron Mohun, costs him as much as the hospital for lepers in Moorgate, and Christ's Hospital, founded for children, in 1553, by Edward VI. Thomas Osborne, Duke of Leeds, spends yearly on his liveries five thousand golden guineas. The Spanish grandees have a guardian appointed by law to prevent them from ruining themselves. That is cowardly. Our lords are extravagant and magnificent. I honour them for it. Let us not abuse them like envious folks. I feel happy when a beautiful vision passes. I do not possess the light myself, but I have the reflection. A reflect on thrown on my ulcer, you will say. Go to the devil! I am a Job, happy in the contemplation of Trimalcion. Oh, that beautiful and radiant planet up there! But the moonlight is something! To suppress the lords was an idea

which Orestes, mad as he was, would not have dared to entertain. To say that the lords are mischievous or useless, is to say that the State should be revolutionized, and that men are not made to live like cattle, browsing the grass and bitten by the dog. The field is shorn by the sheep, the sheep by the shepherd. It is all one to me. I am a philosopher, and I attach just about as much importance to life as a fly. Life is only a lodging-house. When I think that Henry Bowes Howard, Earl of Berkshire, has in his stable twenty-four state carriages, of which one is mounted in silver, and another in gold, — good heavens! I know that every one does not possess twenty-four state carriages; but there is no need to complain for all that. Because you were cold one night, what was that to him? It concerns you only. Others besides you suffer from cold and hunger. Don't you know that but for the cold Dea would not have been blind; and if Dea were not blind, she would not love you? Think of that, you fool! Besides, if all the people who are unhappy were to complain, there would be a pretty tumult! Silence is the rule. I have no doubt that Heaven imposes silence on the damned, otherwise Heaven itself would be spoiled by their everlasting wailing. The happiness of Olympus is ensured by the silence of Cocytus. Then, good people, be silent! I do better myself; I approve and admire.

"Just now I was enumerating the lords, and I ought to add to the list two archbishops and twenty-four bishops. Truly, I am quite affected when I think of it! I remember to have seen at the tithe-gathering of the Rev. Dean of Raphoe, who combined the peerage with the church, a great tithe of beautiful wheat taken from the peasants in the neighbourhood, and which the dean had not been at the trouble of growing. This left him time to say his prayers. Do you know that Lord

Marmaduke, my master, was Lord Grand Treasurer of Ireland, and High Seneschal of the sovereignty of Knaresborough in the county of York? Do you know that the Lord High Chamberlain, which is an hereditary office in the family of the Dukes of Lancaster, dresses the king for his coronation, and receives for his trouble forty yards of crimson velvet, besides the bed on which the king has slept; and that the Usher of the Black Rod is his deputy? I should like to see you deny this, that the senior viscount of England is Robert Brent, created a viscount by Henry V. The lords' titles imply sovereignty over land, except that of Earl Rivers, who takes his title from his family name. How admirable is the right which they have to tax others, and to levy, for instance, four shillings on the pound sterling income-tax, which has just been continued for another year. And all the fine taxes on distilled spirits, on the excise of wine and beer, on tonnage and poundage, on cider, on mum, malt, and prepared barley, on coals, and on a hundred things besides. Let us respect the powers that be. The clergy themselves are dependent on the lords. The Bishop of Man is subject to the Earl of Derby. The lords have wild beasts of their own, which they place in their armorial bearings. God not having made animals enough, they have invented others. They have created the heraldic wild boar, who is as much above the wild boar as a wild boar is above the common pig, and a lord is above a priest. They have created the griffin, which is an eagle to lions, and a lion to eagles, terrifying lions by his wings, and eagles by his mane. They have the guivre, the unicorn, the serpent, the salamander, the tarask, the dree, the dragon, and the hippogriff. All these things, terrible to us, are to them but an ornament and an embellishment. They have a menagerie which they call the blazon, in which

these unknown beasts roar. The prodigies of the forest are nothing compared to the inventions of their pride. Their vanity is full of phantoms which move as in a sublime night, armed with helm and cuirass, spurs on their heels and sceptres in their hands, saying in a grave voice, 'We are the ancestors!' Canker-worms eat the roots, and panoplies eat the people. Why not? Can we expect to change the laws? The peerage is part of the order of society. Do you know that there is a duke in Scotland who can ride ninety miles without leaving his own estate? Do you know that the Archbishop of Canterbury has a revenue of £40,000 a year? Do you know that her Majesty has £700,000 sterling from the civil list, besides castles, forests, domains, fiefs, tenancies, freeholds, prebendaries, tithes, rent, confiscations, and fines, which bring in over a million sterling? Those who are not satisfied are hard to please."

"Yes," murmured Gwynplaine, sadly; "the paradise of the rich is made out of the hell of the poor."

CHAPTER XII.

URSUS THE POET DRAGS ON URSUS THE PHILOSOPHER.

JUST then Dea entered. Gwynplaine looked at her, and saw her only. Such is love; one may be carried away for a moment by the importunity of some other idea, but the beloved one enters, and everything that does not pertain to her immediately fades away, without her dreaming perhaps that she is effacing all the rest of the world from one's mind. Let us mention a circumstance. In "Chaos Vanquished" the word *monstro*, addressed to Gwynplaine, displeased Dea. Sometimes, with the smattering of Spanish, which every one possessed at the period, she took it into her head to replace it by *quiero*, which signifies, "I wish it." Ursus tolerated, although not without considerable impatience, this alteration in his text. He might have said to Dea, as in our own day Moessard said to Vissot, "Tu manques de respect au repertoire." "The Laughing Man." This was the form Gwynplaine's celebrity had assumed. His name, Gwynplaine, but little known at any time, was hidden under this nickname, as his face was hidden under its ghastly grin. His popularity was like his visage, — a mask. His name, however, appeared on a large placard in front of the Green Box, which bore the following notice composed by Ursus: —

"Do not fail to see Gwynplaine, who was deserted at the age of ten, on the night of the 29th of January, 1690, by villainous Comprachicos, on the coast of Portland. The little boy has grown up, and is now known as

"THE LAUGHING MAN."

The existence of these mountebanks resembled the life of lepers in a leper-house as well as of the blessed in one of the Pleiades. Every day there was a sudden transition from the noisy exhibition outside to the most complete seclusion. Every evening they made their exit from the world. They were like the dead, vanishing on condition of being re-born next day. A comedian is a sort of revolving light, appearing one moment, disappearing the next, and existing for the public only as a phantom, as his life circles round. To exhibition succeeded isolation. As soon as the performance was finished, and even while the spectators were dispersing, and their murmur of satisfaction was still heard in the streets, the Green Box drew in its platform, as a fortress does its drawbridge, and all communication with mankind was cut off. On one side, the universe; on the other, the van; but the van contained liberty, clear consciences, courage, devotion, innocence, happiness, love,— all the heavenly constellations. Clear-sighted blindness and fondly beloved deformity sat side by side, — hand pressing hand, brow touching brow,— and whispered to each other, intoxicated with love.

The compartment in the middle of the van served two purposes,— for the public it was a stage; for the actors, a dining-room. Ursus, ever delighting in comparisons, profited by this diversity of uses to liken the central compartment in the Green Box to the arradach in an Abyssinian hut. Ursus counted the receipts, then they supped.

Love idealizes everything. When persons are in love, eating and drinking together afford opportunities for many sweet promiscuous touches, by which a mouthful becomes a kiss. The two drank ale or wine from the same glass, as they might drink dew out of the same

lily. Two souls in love are as full of grace as two birds. Gwynplaine waited on Dea, cut her bread, poured out her drink, approaching as close to her as possible.

"Hum!" cried Ursus, and turned away, his scolding melting into a smile.

The wolf supped under the table, heedless of everything which did not actually affect his bone. Fibi and Vinos shared the repast, but gave no trouble. These vagabonds, who were only half civilized, and as uncouth as ever, conversed with each other in the Gipsy tongue. At length Dea re-entered the women's apartment with Fibi and Vinos. Ursus chained Homo under the Green Box; Gwynplaine looked after the horses, — the lover becoming a groom, like one of Homer's heroes or Charlemagne's paladins. By midnight all were sound asleep, except the wolf, who, alive to his responsibility, now and then opened an eye. The next morning they met again, and breakfasted together, generally on ham and tea. Tea was introduced into England in 1668. In the middle of the day Dea, after the Spanish fashion, took a siesta, acting on the advice of Ursus, who considered her delicate, and slept several hours, while Gwynplaine and Ursus did all the little jobs of work, in doors and out, which their wandering life necessitated.

Gwynplaine rarely wandered far from the Green Box, except on unfrequented roads and in solitary places. In cities he went out only at night, disguised in a large slouched hat, so as not to show his face in the street. His face was seen uncovered only on the stage.

The Green Box had frequented cities but little. Gwynplaine at twenty-four had never seen any town larger than the Cinque Ports. His fame, however, was increasing. It had begun to rise above the populace, and to percolate into higher ground. Among the many who were fond of, and ran after, foreign curiosities and

prodigies, it was known that there was somewhere in existence, leading a wandering life, now here, now there, an extraordinary monster. They talked about him, they sought him, they wondered where he was. The laughing man was becoming decidedly famous. A certain lustre, too, was reflected from him upon "Chaos Vanquished." So much so that one day Ursus, being ambitious, exclaimed, —

"We must go to London."

END OF VOL. I.

THE MAN WHO LAUGHS.

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THE MAN WHO LAUGHS.

BOOK III.

THE BEGINNING OF THE FISSURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE TADCASTER INN.

AT that period London had but one bridge — London Bridge, with houses built upon it. This bridge united London with Southwark, a suburb paved with flint pebbles taken from the Thames, and divided into small streets and alleys, like the city, with a great number of buildings, houses, dwellings, and wooden huts jammed together, — a pell-mell mixture of combustible matter, with which fire might work its will, as 1666 had proved.

Southwark was then pronounced Soudric, it is now pronounced Sousouorc, or near it; indeed, an excellent way of pronouncing English names is not to pronounce them. Thus, for Southampton, say, Stpntn. It was the time when "Chatham" was pronounced *je t'aime.* The Southwark of those days resembles the Southwark of to-day about as much as Vaugirard resembles Marseilles. It was then a village; it is now a city. Nevertheless, considerable business was carried on

there. The long old Cyclopean wall by the Thames was studded with rings, to which the river barges were anchored.

This wall was called the Effroc Wall. York, in Saxon times, was called Effroc. Legend says that a Duke of Effroc was once drowned at the foot of the wall. The water there certainly was deep enough to drown a duke. At low water it was six good fathoms deep. The excellence of this little anchorage attracted many sea vessels, and the old Dutch tub called the "Vograat" came to anchor at the Effroc Wall. The "Vograat" made the crossing from London to Rotterdam, and from Rotterdam to London, punctually once a week. Other barges started twice a day, either for Deptford, Greenwich, or Gravesend, going down with one tide and returning with the next. The voyage to Gravesend, though twenty miles, was made in six hours.

The "Vograat" was of a model no longer seen now, except in naval museums. It was almost a junk. At that time, while France copied Greece, Holland copied China. The "Vograat," a heavy hull with two masts, was partitioned perpendicularly, so as to be water-tight, having a narrow hold in the middle, and two decks, one fore and the other aft. The decks were flush, as in the iron turret-vessels of the present day,— the advantage of which is that in foul weather the force of the waves is diminished, and the disadvantage of which is that the crew is exposed to the action of the sea, owing to there being no bulwarks. There was nothing to save any one on board from falling into the sea. Hence the frequent losses of men, which caused the model to fall into disuse. The "Vograat" went to Holland direct, and did not even stop at Gravesend.

An old ridge of stones, solid rock as well as masonry, ran along the bottom of the Effroc Wall, and being pas-

sable at all tides, was used to board the ships moored to the wall. This wall was furnished with steps at intervals. It marked the southern limits of Southwark. An embankment at the top allowed the passers-by to rest their elbows on the Effroc Wall, as on the parapet of a quay. Thence they could look down on the Thames; on the other side of the river London dwindled away into fields.

A little way up the river above the Effroc Wall, at the bend in the Thames which is nearly opposite St. James's Palace, behind Lambeth House, not far from the walk then called Foxhall (Vauxhall, probably), there was, between a pottery in which they made porcelain, and a glass-blower's where they made ornamental bottles, one of those large unenclosed spaces covered with grass, called formerly in France *cultures* and *mails*, and in England bowling-greens. Of bowling-green, a green on which to roll a ball, the French have made *boulingrin*. Folks have this green inside their houses nowadays, only it is put on the table, is a cloth instead of turf, and is called billiards.

It is difficult to see why, having boulevard (boulevert), which is the same word as bowling-green, the French should have adopted *boulingrin*. It is surprising that anything as sensible as the Dictionary should indulge in useless luxuries.

The bowling-green of Southwark was called Tarrinzeau Field, because it once belonged to the Barons Hastings, who are also Barons Tarrinzeau and Mauchline. From the Lords Hastings the Tarrinzeau Field passed to the Lords Tadcaster, who made a speculation of it, just as, at a later date, a Duke of Orleans made a speculation of the Palais Royal. Tarrinzeau Field afterwards became waste ground and parochial property. Tarrinzeau Field was a kind of permanent fair-ground, frequented by

jugglers, athletes, mountebanks, and strolling musicians, and always full of "fools going to look at the devil," as Archbishop Sharpe said. To look at the devil meant to go to the play.

Several inns, which harboured the public and sent them to these outlandish exhibitions, were established in this place, which kept holiday all the year round, and thereby prospered. These inns were simply stalls, occupied only during the day. In the evening the tavern-keeper put the key of the tavern in his pocket and went away. There was but one permanent dwelling on the whole green, the vans on the fair-ground being likely to disappear at any moment, by reason of the absence of any home ties and the vagabond life of all mountebanks. Mountebanks have no roots to their lives.

This inn, called the Tadcaster, after the former owners of the ground, was an inn rather than a tavern, a hotel rather than an inn, and had a carriage entrance and a large yard. The carriage entrance, opening from the court on the field, was the legitimate door of the Tadcaster Inn, which had besides, at the farther end, a small, low door, by which people entered. This small door was the only one used. It opened into a large tap-room, full of tobacco smoke, furnished with tables, and low of ceiling. Over it was a window, to the iron bars of which was fastened and hung the sign of the inn. The principal door was barred and bolted, and always remained closed. It was thus necessary to cross the tavern to enter the courtyard.

At the Tadcaster Inn there was a landlord and a boy. The landlord was called Master Nicless; the boy, Govicum. Master Nicless — Nicholas, doubtless, which the English habit of contraction had made Nicless — was a miserly widower, but one who respected and feared the

laws. As to his appearance, he had bushy eyebrows and hairy hands. The boy, aged fourteen, who poured out drink, and answered to the name of Govicum, wore a merry face and an apron. His hair was cropped close, — a sign of servitude. He slept on the ground-floor, in a nook in which they formerly kept a dog. This nook had for a window a bull's-eye looking out on the green.

CHAPTER II.

OPEN-AIR ELOQUENCE.

ONE very cold and windy evening, when there was every reason that folks should hasten on their way along the streets, a man who was walking in Tarrinzeau Field close under the walls of the tavern, stopped suddenly. It was during the last months of the winter of 1704 and 1705. This man, who wore the garb of a sailor, was of good mien and fine figure, — things imperative to courtiers, and not forbidden to common folk.

Why did he stop? To listen. To what? To a voice apparently speaking in the court on the other side of the wall, — a voice a little weakened by age, but so powerful, notwithstanding, that it reached the passer-by in the street. At the same time might be heard in the enclosure, from which the voice came, the hubbub of a crowd. This voice said: —

"Men and women of London, here I am! I sincerely congratulate you on being English. You are a great nation; I say more, — you are a great people. Your fisticuffs are even better than your sword-thrusts. You have an appetite. You are a nation that devours other nations, — a magnificent function! As politicians and philosophers, in the management of colonies, populations, and industry, and in the desire to do others any harm which may turn to your own good, you stand pre-eminent. The hour will come when two boards will be put up on earth; on one will be inscribed 'Men,' on

the other, 'Englishmen.' I mention this to your glory, — I, who am neither English nor human, having the honour to be a bear. Still more — I am a doctor. That follows. Gentlemen, I teach. What? Two kinds of things, — things which I know, and things which I do not know. I sell my drugs, and I sell my ideas. Approach and listen. Science invites you. Open your ear: if it is small, it will hold but little truth; if large, a great deal of folly will find its way in. Now, then, attention! I teach the Pseudoxia Epidemica. I have a comrade who will make you laugh, but I can make you think. We live in the same box, laughter being of quite as old a family as thought. When people asked Democritus, 'How do you know?' he answered, 'I laugh.' And if I am asked, 'Why do you laugh?' I shall answer, 'I know.' However, I am not laughing. I am a corrector of popular errors. I take upon myself the task of cleaning your intellects. They require it. Heaven permits people to deceive themselves, and to be deceived. It is useless to be absurdly modest. I frankly avow that I believe in Providence, even where it is wrong. But when I see filth (errors are filth) I brush it away. How am I sure of what I know? That concerns only myself. Every one catches wisdom as he can. Lactantius asked questions of, and received answers from, a bronze head of Virgil. Sylvester II. conversed with birds. Did the birds speak? Did the Pope twitter? That is a question. The dead child of the Rabbi Eleazer talked to Saint Augustin. Between ourselves, I doubt all these facts except the last. The dead child might perhaps talk, because under its tongue it had a gold plate, on which were engraved divers constellations. Thus he deceived people. The fact explains itself. You see my moderation. I separate the true from the false. See! here are other errors which

no doubt you share, poor ignorant folks that you are, and from which I wish to free you. Dioscorides believed that there was a god in henbane; Chrysippus in cynopaste; Josephus in the root bauras; Homer in the plant moly. They were all wrong. The spirits in herbs are not gods but devils. I have tested this fact. It is not true that the serpent which tempted Eve had a human face, as Cadmus relates. Garcias de Horto, Cadamosto, and John Hugo, Archbishop of Trèves, deny that it is sufficient to cut down a tree to catch an elephant. I incline to their opinion. Citizens, the efforts of Lucifer are the cause of all false impressions. Under the reign of such a prince it is natural that meteors of error and of perdition should appear. My friends, Claudius Pulcher did not die because the fowls refused to come out of the fowl house. The fact is, that Lucifer, having foreseen the death of Claudius Pulcher, took care to prevent the birds feeding. That Beelzebub gave the Emperor Vespasian the virtue of curing the lame and giving sight to the blind, by his touch, was an act praiseworthy in itself, but the motive was culpable. Gentlemen, distrust those false doctors who sell the root of the briony and the white snake, and who make washes with honey and the blood of a cock. When Saint George killed the dragon he had not the daughter of a saint standing by his side. Saint Jerome had not a clock on the chimney-piece of his study; first, because living in a cave, he had no study; secondly, because he had no chimney-piece; thirdly, because clocks were not yet invented. Let us put these things straight. O gentlefolks who listen to me, if any one tells you that a lizard will be born in your head if you smell the herb valerian; that the rotting carcass of the ox changes into bees, and that of the horse into hornets; that a man weighs more when dead than when alive; that the blood

of the he-goat dissolves emeralds; that a caterpillar, a fly, and a spider, seen on the same tree, presage famine, war, and pestilence; that the falling sickness is to be cured by a worm found in the head of a buck, — do not believe him. These things are errors. But now listen to truths. The skin of a sea-calf is a safeguard against thunder. The toad feeds upon earth, which causes a stone to come into his head. The rose of Jericho blooms on Christmas-eve. Serpents cannot endure the shadow of the ash-tree. The elephant has no joints, and sleeps resting against a tree. Make a toad sit upon a cock's egg and he will hatch a scorpion which will turn into a salamander. A blind person will regain sight by putting one hand on the left side of the altar and the other on his eyes. Virginity does not prevent maternity. Honest people, lay these truths to heart. Above all, you can believe in Providence in two ways, — either as thirst believes in the orange, or as the ass believes in the whip. Now I am going to introduce you to my family."

Here a violent gust of wind shook the window-frames and shutters of the inn. The orator paused a moment, and then resumed: —

"An interruption; very good. Speak, north wind. Gentlemen, I am not angry. The wind is loquacious, like all solitary creatures. There is no one to keep him company up there, so he jabbers. I resume the thread of my discourse. Here you see an association of artists. There are four of us, — *a lupo principium.* I begin with my friend, who is a wolf. He does not conceal it. Look at him! He is educated, grave, and sagacious. Providence, perhaps, entertained for a moment the idea of making him a doctor of the university; but for that one must be rather stupid, and that he is not. I may add that he has no prejudices, and is not aristocratic in

his notions. Homo is a dog made perfect. Let us venerate the dog. The dog — curious animal! — sweats with its tongue and smiles with its tail. Gentlemen, Homo equals in wisdom, and surpasses in cordiality, the hairless wolf of Mexico, the wonderful xoloïtzeniski. I may add that he is humble. He has the modesty of a wolf who is useful to men. He is helpful and charitable, and says nothing about it. His left paw knows not the good which his right paw does. These are his merits. Of the other, my second friend, I have but a word to say. He is a monster. You will admire him. He was abandoned years ago by pirates on the shores of the wild ocean. This third one is blind. Is she an exception to the general rule? No, we are all blind. The miser is blind; he sees gold, but he does not see true riches. The prodigal is blind; he sees the beginning, but not the end. The coquette is blind; she does not see her own wrinkles. The learned man is blind; he does not see his own ignorance. The honest man is blind; he does not see the thief. The thief is blind; he does not see God. God is blind; the day he created the world he did not see the devil manage to creep into it. I myself am blind; I speak, and do not see that you are deaf. This blind girl who accompanies us is a mysterious priestess. Vesta has confided her torch to her. She has in her character depths as soft as a division in the wool of a sheep. I believe her to be a king's daughter, though I do not assert it as a fact. A laudable distrust is an attribute of wisdom. For my own part, I reason and I doctor, I think and I heal. *Chirurgus sum.* I cure fevers, miasmas, and plagues. Almost all our melancholy and sufferings are issues, which if carefully treated relieve us quietly of other evils which might be worse. All the same I do not recommend you to have an anthrax, otherwise called a carbuncle. It is a stupid malady,

and serves no good end. One dies of it, — that is all. I am no ignorant boor; I honour eloquence and poetry, and live in an innocent union with these goddesses. I will conclude with a piece of advice. Ladies and gentlemen, on the sunny side of your dispositions cultivate virtue, modesty, honesty, probity, justice, and love. Each one here below may thus have his little pot of flowers on his window-sill. My lords and gentlemen, I have spoken. The play is about to begin."

The man dressed as a sailor, who had been listening outside, entered the tap-room of the inn, crossed it, paid the necessary entrance money, stepped into the courtyard, which was full of people, saw at the farther end of it a huge van on wheels, wide open, and on the platform an old man dressed in a bearskin, a young man with a face like a horrible mask, a blind girl, and a wolf.

"Gracious heaven, what amusing people!" he cried.

CHAPTER III.

WHERE THE PASSER-BY REAPPEARS.

THE Green Box, as we have just seen, had arrived in London, and was now established in Southwark. Ursus had been tempted by the bowling-green, which had one great recommendation,—it was always fair-day there, even in winter.

The dome of St. Paul's was a delight to Ursus. London, take it all in all, has some good in it. It was a brave thing to dedicate a cathedral to Saint Paul. The real cathedral saint is Saint Peter. Saint Paul is suspected of imagination, and in matters ecclesiastical imagination means heresy. Saint Paul is a saint only by virtue of extenuating circumstances. He entered heaven only through the artists' door. A cathedral is a sign. St. Peter is the sign of Rome, the city of dogma; St. Paul that of London, the city of schism.

Ursus, whose philosophy had arms so long that it embraced everything, was a man who appreciated these shades of difference; and his attraction towards London arose, perhaps, from a certain admiration for Saint Paul.

The yard of the Tadcaster Inn had taken Ursus' fancy. It might have been made for the Green Box. It was a theatre ready-made. It was square, enclosed by the inn on three sides and on the fourth by a wall. Against this wall was placed the Green Box, which they had been able to draw into the yard, owing to the height of the gate.

A large wooden piazza roofed over, and supported on posts, on which the rooms of the first story opened, ran round the three sides of the interior façade of the house, making two right angles. The windows of the ground-floor made boxes, the pavement of the court, the pit; and the balcony the gallery. The Green Box, placed against the wall, had quite an audience hall in front of it. It was very like the Globe, where they played "Othello," "King Lear," and "The Tempest." In a corner behind the Green Box there was a stable. Ursus had made his arrangements with the tavern-keeper, Master Nicless, who, owing to his respect for the law, would not admit the wolf without charging him extra.

The placard, "GWYNPLAINE, THE LAUGHING MAN," taken from its nail in the Green Box, was hung up close to the sign of the inn. The sitting-room of the tavern had, as we have seen, an inside door, which opened into the court. By the door was constructed off-hand, by means of an empty barrel, an office for the door-keeper, who was sometimes Fibi, and sometimes Vinos. It was managed much as at present,—pay and pass in. Under the placard announcing the LAUGHING MAN was a piece of wood, painted white, on which was written with charcoal in large letters the title of Ursus' grand piece, "Chaos Vanquished." In the centre of the balcony, precisely opposite the Green Box, and in a compartment having for an entrance a window reaching to the ground, there had been partitioned off a space "for the nobility." It was large enough to hold two rows of spectators, ten in each row. "We are in London," said Ursus. "We must be prepared for the gentry." He had furnished this box with the best chairs in the inn, and had placed in the centre a large arm-chair covered with plush, in case some alderman's wife should come.

They began their performances. The crowd immedi-

ately flocked to them, but the compartment for the nobility remained empty. With that exception their success became so great that no showman had ever seen anything to equal it. All Southwark ran in crowds to admire the Laughing Man.

The merry-andrews and mountebanks of Tarrinzeau Field were aghast at Gwynplaine. The effect he created was similar to that of a sparrow-hawk flapping his wings in a cage of goldfinches, and feeding in their seed-trough. Gwynplaine gobbled up their patrons. Besides the small fry, such as the swallowers of swords and the grimace makers, real performances took place on the green. There was a circus resounding from morning till night with the blare of all sorts of instruments, — psalteries, drums, rebecks, micamons, timbrels, reeds, dulcimers, gongs, chevrettes, bagpipes, German horns, English eschaqueils, pipes, flutes, and flageolets. In a large round tent were some tumblers, who could not equal our present climbers of the Pyrenees, — Dulma, Bordenave, and Meylonga, — who descend from the peak of Pierrefitte to the plateau of Limaçon, an almost perpendicular height. There was a travelling menagerie, with a performing tiger, who, when struck by the keeper, snapped at the whip and tried to swallow the lash. But even this comedian with jaws and claws was eclipsed in success. Curiosity, applause, receipts, crowds, — the Laughing Man monopolized everything. It all came about in the twinkling of an eye. Nothing was thought of but the Green Box.

"'Chaos Vanquished' is 'Chaos Victor,'" said Ursus, appropriating half Gwynplaine's success, and thus taking the wind out of his sails, as they say at sea. The success was prodigious. Still, it remained local. Fame does not cross the sea easily. It took a hundred and thirty years for the name of Shakspeare to penetrate

from England into France. The sea is a wall; and if Voltaire — a thing which he very much regretted having done when it was too late — had not built a bridge over to Shakspeare, Shakspeare might still be in England, on the other side of the wall, the captive of an insular glory.

The glory of Gwynplaine had not crossed London Bridge. It was not great enough to re-echo through the city, — at least not yet. But Southwark ought to have sufficed to satisfy the ambition of a clown.

"The money bag grows perceptibly heavier," Ursus remarked one day.

They played "Ursus Rursus" and "Chaos Vanquished." Between the acts, Ursus exhibited his power as an engastrimythist, and executed marvels of ventriloquism. He imitated every sound heard in the audience, each snatch of song or exclamation, so perfectly as to amaze and startle the speaker or singer himself; and now and then he copied the hubbub of the public, and whistled as if there were a crowd of people within him. These were remarkable talents. Besides this, he harangued like Cicero, as we have just seen, sold his drugs, prescribed for maladies, and even healed the sick. Southwark was enthralled.

Ursus was satisfied, but by no means astonished with the applause of Southwark. "They are the ancient Trinobantes," he said. Then he added, "I must not confound them, for delicacy of taste, with the Atrobates, who people Berkshire, the Belgians, who inhabited Somersetshire, or the Parisians, who founded York."

At every performance the yard of the inn, transformed into a pit, was filled with a ragged and enthusiastic audience. It was composed of watermen, chairmen, coachmen, and bargemen and sailors, just ashore, spending their wages in feasting and debauchery. In it there were

felons, ruffians, and blackguards, — these last soldiers condemned for some breach of discipline to wear their red coats, which were lined with black, inside out, hence the name of blackguard, which the French turn into *blagueurs*. All these flowed from the street into the theatre, and poured back from the theatre into the tap-room. The emptying of tankards did not decrease the company's success.

Amid what it is customary to call the scum, there was one taller than the rest, bigger, stronger, less poverty-stricken, broader in the shoulders; dressed like the common people, but not ragged; admiring and applauding everything to the skies, clearing his way with his fists, wearing a disordered periwig, swearing, shouting, joking, never dirty, and, if need be, ready to blacken an eye or pay for a bottle. This frequenter was the passer-by whose enthusiastic remark has already been recorded.

This connoisseur seemed to have taken an immense fancy to the Laughing Man. He did not attend every performance, but when he came he led the public; applause grew into acclamation; success soared not to the roof, for there was none, but to the clouds, for there were plenty of them, — which clouds (seeing that there was no roof) sometimes wept over the masterpiece of Ursus. His enthusiasm caused Ursus to notice this man, and Gwynplaine too observed him. They had a great friend in this unknown visitor. Ursus and Gwynplaine wanted to know him, — or at least to know who he was.

One evening Ursus, being in the side scene, which was the kitchen-door of the Green Box, and seeing Master Nicless standing by him, pointed this man out to the tavern-keeper and asked, —

"Do you know that man?"

"Of course I do."

"Who is he?"

"A sailor."

"What is his name?" said Gwynplaine, interrupting

"Tom-Jim-Jack," replied the inn-keeper.

Then, as he re-descended the steps at the back of the Green Box, to enter the inn, Master Nicless let fall this profound reflection, so deep as to be unintelligible: "What a pity that he is not a lord! He would make a famous scoundrel."

Otherwise, although established in the tavern, the group in the Green Box had in no way altered their manner of living, and maintained their isolated habits. Except a few words exchanged now and then with the tavern-keeper, they held no communication with any of the persons who were living, either permanently or temporarily, in the inn; and continued to hold themselves rigorously aloof.

During their stay at Southwark, Gwynplaine had made it his habit, after the performance and the supper of both family and horses,— when Ursus and Dea had gone to bed in their respective apartments,— to enjoy the fresh air of the bowling-green a little, between eleven o'clock and midnight. A certain restlessness of spirit impels us to take walks at night, and to saunter about under the stars. There is a mysterious expectancy in youth. Hence it is that we are prone to wander out in the night, without an object. At that hour there was no one in the fair-ground, except, perhaps, some reeling drunkard, making wavering shadows in dark corners. The empty taverns were shut up, and the lower room in the Tadcaster Inn was dark, except where, in some corner, a solitary candle lighted a last reveller. A faint light gleamed through the window-shutters of the half-closed tavern as Gwynplaine, pen-

sive, content, and dreaming, enveloped in a haze of divine joy, paced backwards and forwards in front of the half-open door. Of what was he thinking? Of Dea — of nothing — of everything. He never wandered far from the Green Box, being held, as by an invisible thread, to Dea. A few steps away from it was far enough for him. When he returned, he generally found all the inmates of the Green Box asleep, and so went straight to bed himself.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTRARIES FRATERNIZE IN HATE.

THE success of others is odious in the sight of those whom it injures. The eaten rarely adore the eaters.

The Laughing Man had made a decided hit. The mountebanks around were indignant. A theatrical success is a siphon,—it draws in the crowd and creates emptiness all round. The show opposite is ruined. The increased receipts of the Green Box caused a corresponding decrease in the receipts of the surrounding shows. These entertainments, which had been very popular up to that time, suddenly collapsed. It was like a low-water mark, showing inversely, but in perfect concordance, the rise here, the fall there. Theatres experience the effect of the tides, which rise in one only on condition of falling in another.

The strolling players who exhibited their talents and musical accomplishments on the neighbouring platforms, seeing themselves ruined by the Laughing Man, were wild with despair, though dazzled. All the grimacers, all the clowns, all the merry-andrews envied Gwynplaine. How happy he must be with a snout like a wild beast! The buffoon mothers and dancers on the tight-rope, with pretty children, looked at them in anger, and pointing out Gwynplaine, would say, "What a pity you have not a face like that!" Some even beat their babies savagely for being pretty.

More than one, had she known the secret, would have fashioned her son's face in the Gwynplaine style. The head of an angel, which brings no money in, is not as desirable as that of a paying demon. One day the mother of a little child who was a marvel of beauty, and who acted the part of a cupid, exclaimed: —

"Our children are failures! A Gwynplaine alone is successful." And shaking her fist at her son, she added, "If I only knew your father, would n't he catch it!"

Gwynplaine was the goose with the golden eggs. What a marvellous phenomenon! There was an uproar through all the caravans. The mountebanks, at once enthusiastic and exasperated, looked at Gwynplaine and gnashed their teeth. Admiring anger is called envy. How it howls! They tried to break up "Chaos Vanquished;" made a cabal, hissed, yelled, and shouted. This gave Ursus an excuse to make out-of-door harangues to the populace, and for his friend Tom-Jim-Jack to use his fists to re-establish order. His pugilistic marks of friendship brought him still more under the notice and regard of Ursus and Gwynplaine, — at a distance, however; for the party in the Green Box sufficed to themselves, and held aloof from the rest of the world, and because Tom-Jim-Jack, the leader of the mob, seemed a sort of lordly bully, without a tie, without a friend; a smasher of windows, a manager of men, now here, now gone, hail-fellow-well-met with every one, companion of none.

This raging envy against Gwynplaine was not quelled by a few friendly blows from Tom-Jim-Jack. Violence having failed, the mountebanks of Tarrinzeau Field fell back on a petition. They appealed to the authorities. This is the usual course. Against an unpleasant success we first try to stir up the crowd, and then we petition to the magistrate.

The reverends allied themselves with the merry-andrews. The Laughing Man had inflicted a blow on the preachers. There were empty places not only in the shows, but in the churches. The congregations in the churches of the five parishes in Southwark had dwindled away. People left before the sermon to go to see Gwynplaine. "Chaos Vanquished," the Green Box, the Laughing Man, all the abominations of Baal, eclipsed the eloquence of the pulpit. The voice crying in the desert, — *vox clamantis in deserto,* — is discontented, and is prone to call in the aid of the authorities. The clergy of the five parishes complained to the Bishop of London, who in turn complained to her Majesty.

The complaint of the merry-andrews was based on religion. They declared it to be insulted. They described Gwynplaine as a sorcerer, and Ursus as an atheist. The reverend gentlemen invoked social order. Setting orthodoxy aside, they took action on the fact that acts of parliament were violated. This was clever, for it was in the time of Mr. Locke, who had died only six months previous, — October 28, 1704, — and when the scepticism which Bolingbroke had instilled into Voltaire was taking root. Later on Wesley came and restored the Bible, as Loyola restored papacy.

Thus the Green Box was attacked on all sides, — by the merry-andrews, in the name of the Pentateuch, and by chaplains in the name of social order; in the name of Heaven and of the inspectors of nuisances, — the reverends espousing the cause of the police, and the mountebanks that of Heaven. The Green Box was denounced by the priests as a disturbing element, and by the jugglers as sacrilegious.

Had they any pretext? Was there any excuse? Yes. What was the objection? This: the wolf. A dog was allowable; a wolf forbidden. In England the wolf is

an outlaw. England permits the dog which barks, but not the dog which howls, — that being the distinction between the denizen of the yard and the woods. The rectors and vicars of the five parishes of Southwark called attention in their petitions to numerous parliamentary and royal statutes putting the wolf beyond the protection of the law. They moved for something like the imprisonment of Gwynplaine and the execution of the wolf, or at any rate for their banishment. The question was one of public importance, the danger to persons passing, etc. And on this point they appealed to the Faculty. They cited the opinion of the eighty physicians of London, — a learned body which dates from Henry VIII., which has a seal like that of the State, which can raise sick people to the dignity of criminals, which has the right to imprison those who infringe its laws and ignore its ordinances, and which, among other useful regulations for the welfare of citizens, establishes beyond a doubt this discovery of science; namely, if a wolf sees a man first, the man becomes hoarse for life. Besides, he may be bitten.

Homo, then, was the pretext.

Ursus heard of these designs through the inn-keeper. He was uneasy. He was afraid of the police and the justices. To be afraid of the magistracy, it suffices to be timid; there is no need to be guilty. Ursus had no desire for contact with sheriffs, provosts, bailiffs, and coroners. His eagerness to make their acquaintance amounted to nil. His curiosity to see the magistrates was about as great as the hare's to see the greyhound. He began to regret that he had come to London. "'Better' is the enemy of 'good,'" murmured he apart. "I thought there was no truth in the proverb. I was wrong. Stupid sayings seem to be true after all."

Against the coalition of powers, — merry-andrews es-

pousing the cause of religion, and chaplains indignant in behalf of medicine,— the poor Green Box, suspected of sorcery in Gwynplaine and of hydrophobia in Homo, had only one thing in its favour (a thing of great power in England however): municipal inactivity. It is to an inclination on the part of the local authorities to let things take their course that Englishmen owe their liberty. Liberty in England behaves very much like the sea around England. The tide rises. Little by little customs surmount the law. A cruel system of legislation drowned under the wave of custom; a savage code of laws still visible through the transparency of universal liberty: such is England.

The Laughing Man, "Chaos Vanquished," and Homo might have mountebanks, preachers, bishops, the House of Commons, the House of Lords, her Majesty, London, and the whole of England against them, and remain undisturbed so long as Southwark sided with them. The Green Box was the favourite amusement of the suburb, and the local authorities seemed disinclined to interfere. In England, indifference is protection. So long as the sheriff of the county of Surrey in whose jurisdiction Southwark belongs, did not move in the matter, Ursus breathed freely, and Homo could sleep on in peace.

So long as the hatred which the show excited did not occasion acts of violence, it increased its success. The Green Box was none the worse for it, as yet. On the contrary, the rumours that were rife only increased public curiosity, and the Laughing Man became more and more popular. The public follow with gusto the scent of anything contraband. To be suspected is a recommendation. The people adopt by instinct that at which the finger is pointed. The thing which is denounced is like the savour of forbidden fruit; we long

to taste it. Besides, applause which irritates some one, especially if that some one is in authority, is sweet. To perform, while passing a pleasant evening, both an act of kindness to the oppressed, and of opposition to the oppressor, is agreeable. You are protecting at the same time that you are being amused. So the theatrical caravans on the bowling-green continued to howl and to cabal against the Laughing Man. Nothing could have been more certain to enhance his success. The shouts of one's enemies are useful in giving point and vitality to one's triumph. A friend wearies sooner in praise than an enemy in abuse. To abuse does not hurt. Enemies are ignorant of this fact. They cannot help insulting us, and therein lies their usefulness. They cannot hold their tongues, and thus keep the public awake. The crowds which flocked to "Chaos Vanquished" increased daily.

Ursus kept what Master Nicless had said of intriguers and complaints in high places to himself, and did not tell Gwynplaine, lest it should impair the ease of his acting by creating anxiety. If evil was to come, he would be sure to know it soon enough.

CHAPTER V.

THE WAPENTAKE.

ONCE, however, he felt it his duty to deviate from this prudent course, thinking that it might be well to make Gwynplaine a little uneasy. It is true that this idea arose from a circumstance much graver, in the opinion of Ursus, than the cabals of his fellow showmen or of the church.

Gwynplaine, as he picked up a farthing, which had fallen when counting the receipts, had, in the presence of the inn-keeper, drawn a contrast between the farthing, representing the misery of the people, and the die, representing (under the figure of Anne) the parasitical magnificence of the throne, — an ill-sounding speech. This observation was repeated by Master Nicless, and had such a run that it reached Ursus through Fibi and Vinos. It put Ursus into a fever. Seditious words, *lèse Majesté.* He took Gwynplaine severely to task:

"Watch over your abominable tongue. There is a rule for the great, — 'Do nothing;' and a rule for the small, — 'Say nothing.' The poor man has but one friend, silence. He should pronounce only one syllable, 'Yes.' To confess and to consent is all the right he has. He should say 'Yes' to the judge; 'Yes' to the king. Great people can beat us, if it so pleases them. I have received blows from them. It is their prerogative; and they lose nothing of their greatness by breaking our bones. The ossifrage is a species of eagle.

Let us respect the sceptre, which is the chief of staves. Respect is prudence, and mediocrity is safety. To insult the king is to put one's self in the same danger as a girl who rashly attempts to pare the nails of a lion. They tell me that you have been prattling about the farthing, which is the same thing as the liard, and that you have found fault with the august medallion for which they sell us at market the eighth part of a salt herring. Take care! let us be serious. Consider the existence of pains and penalties. Suck in these legislative truths. You are in a country in which the man who cuts down a tree three years old is quietly taken off to the gallows. As to swearers, their feet are put into the stocks. The drunkard is shut up in a barrel, with the bottom out so that he can walk, with a hole in the top through which his head is passed, and with two in the sides for his hands, so that he cannot lie down. He who strikes another man in Westminster Hall is imprisoned for life and has his goods confiscated. Whoever strikes any one in the king's palace has his hand cut off. A fillip on the nose chances to bleed, and, behold! you are maimed for life. He who is convicted of heresy in the bishop's court is burnt alive. It was for no great crime that Cuthbert Simpson was quartered on a turnstile. Three years since, in 1702, not so very long ago you see, they placed in the pillory a scoundrel called Daniel Defoe, who had the audacity to print the names of the Members of Parliament who had spoken on the previous evening. He who commits high treason is disembowelled alive, and they tear out his heart and buffet his cheeks with it. Impress these notions of right and justice on your mind. Never allow yourself to speak a rash word, and at the first cause of anxiety run for it. Such is the bravery which I counsel and which I practise. In the way of temerity, imitate the

birds; in the way of talking, imitate the fishes. England has one admirable point in her favour, — her legislation is very mild."

His admonition over, Ursus remained uneasy for some time; Gwynplaine, not at all. The intrepidity of youth arises from want of experience. However, it seemed that Gwynplaine had good reason for his easy mind, for the weeks flowed on peacefully, and no bad consequences seemed to have resulted from his observations about the queen.

Ursus, like a roebuck on the watch, kept a lookout in every direction. One day, a short time after his sermon to Gwynplaine, as he was looking out from the window in the wall which commanded the field, he became suddenly pale.

"Gwynplaine!"

"What?"

"Look!"

"Where?"

"In the field."

"Well?"

"Do you see that man?"

"The man in black?"

"Yes."

"Who has a kind of mace in his hand?"

"Yes."

"Well?"

"Well, Gwynplaine, that man is the wapentake."

"What is the wapentake?"

"He is the bailiff of the hundred."

"What is the bailiff of the hundred?"

"He is the *præpositus hundredi.*"

"And what is the *præpositus hundredi?*"

"He is a terrible officer."

"What has he got in his hand?"

"The iron weapon."

"What is the iron weapon?"

"A thing made of iron."

"What does he do with that?"

"First of all, he swears upon it. It is for that reason that he is called the wapentake."

"And then?"

"Then he touches you with it."

"With what?"

"With the iron weapon."

"The wapentake touches you with the iron weapon?"

"Yes."

"What does that mean?"

"That means, 'Follow me.'"

"And must you follow him?"

"Yes."

"Whither?"

"How should I know?"

"But he tells you where he is going to take you, does he not?"

"No."

"How is that?"

"He says nothing, and you say nothing."

"But —"

"He touches you with the iron weapon. All is over then. You must go."

"Go where?"

"With him."

"But where?"

"Wherever he likes, Gwynplaine."

"And if you resist?"

"You are hanged."

Ursus looked out of the window again, and drawing a long breath, exclaimed: "Thank God! He has passed. He is not coming here."

Ursus was perhaps unreasonably alarmed about the indiscreet remark, and the consequences likely to result from Gwynplaine's words.

Master Nicless, who had heard them, had no interest in compromising the poor inmates of the Green Box. He was amassing, at the same time as the Laughing Man, a nice little fortune. "Chaos Vanquished" had succeeded in two ways. It not only made art triumph on the stage, but it made drunkenness increase in the tavern.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MOUSE EXAMINED BY THE CATS.

URSUS was soon afterwards startled by another alarming circumstance. This time he was the person concerned. He was summoned to Bishopsgate, before a commission composed of three important personages, — three doctors, called overseers. One was a Doctor of Theology, delegated by the Dean of Westminster; another, a Doctor of Medicine, delegated by the College of Surgeons; the third, a Doctor in History and Civil Law, delegated by Gresham College. These three experts *in omne re scibili* had the censorship of everything said in public throughout the bounds of the hundred and thirty parishes of London, the seventy-three of Middlesex, and, by extension, the five of Southwark.

Such theological jurisdictions still exist in England, and do good service. In December, 1868, by sentence of the Court of Arches, confirmed by the decision of the Privy Council, the Reverend Mackonochie was censured, besides being condemned to pay costs, for having placed lighted candles on a table. The liturgy allows no jokes.

One fine day Ursus received from the delegates an order to appear before them, which was, luckily, given into his own hands, and which he was therefore enabled to keep a secret. Without saying a word, he obeyed the citation, shuddering at the thought that he might be considered culpable to the extent of being suspected of

a certain amount of rashness. He who had so recommended silence to others had here a rough lesson. *Garrule sana teipsum.*

The three doctors sat at Bishopsgate, at the end of a room on the ground-floor, in three arm-chairs covered with black leather, with three busts,— those of Minos, Æacus, and Rhadamanthus,— on the wall above their heads, a table before them, and at their feet a form for the accused. Ursus, introduced by a tipstaff, of placid but severe expression, entered, perceived the doctors, and immediately in his own mind gave to each of them the name of the judge of the infernal regions represented by the bust placed above his head. Minos, the president, the representative of theology, made him a sign to sit down on the form.

Ursus made a proper bow, — that is to say, bowed to the ground; and knowing that bears are charmed by honey and doctors by Latin, he said, keeping his body still bent respectfully: "*Tres faciunt capitulum!*" Then, with head still inclined (for modesty disarms), he sat down on the form.

Each of the three doctors had before him a bundle of papers, of which he was turning the leaves. Minos began: —

"You speak in public?"

"Yes," replied Ursus.

"By what right?"

"I am a philosopher."

"That gives no right."

"I am also a mountebank," said Ursus.

"That is a different thing."

Ursus breathed again, but with humility.

Minos resumed: "As a mountebank, you may speak; as a philosopher, you must keep silence."

"I will try," said Ursus. Then he thought to him-

self: "I may speak, but I must be silent. How complicated!" He was much alarmed.

The same functionary continued: "You say things which do not sound right. You insult religion. You deny the most evident truths. You propagate revolting errors. For instance, you have said that the fact of virginity excludes the possibility of maternity."

Ursus lifted his eyes meekly: "I did not say that. I said that the fact of maternity excludes the possibility of virginity."

Minos was thoughtful, and mumbled, "True, that is the contrary."

It was really the same thing. But Ursus had parried the first blow.

Minos, meditating on the answer just given by Ursus, sank into the depths of his own imbecility, and kept silent.

The overseer of history, or, as Ursus called him, Rhadamanthus, covered the retreat of Minos by this interpolation: "Accused! your audacity and your errors are of two sorts. You have denied that the battle of Pharsalia was lost because Brutus and Cassius had met a negro."

"I said," murmured Ursus, "that there was something in the fact that Cæsar was the better captain."

The man of history passed, without transition, to mythology. "You have excused the infamous acts of Actæon."

"I think," said Ursus, insinuatingly, "that a man is not dishonoured by having seen a naked woman."

"Then you are wrong," said the judge, severely.

Rhadamanthus returned to history. "Apropos of the accidents which happened to the cavalry of Mithridates, you have denied the virtues of herbs and plants. You have denied that an herb like the securiduca could make the shoes of horses fall off."

"Pardon me," replied Ursus. "I said that the power existed only in the herb *sferra cavallo.* I never denied the virtue of any herb." And he added, in a low voice, "Nor of any woman."

By this extraneous addition to his answer Ursus proved to himself that, anxious as he was, he was not disheartened. Ursus was a compound of terror and presence of mind.

"To continue," resumed Rhadamanthus; "you have declared that it was folly in Scipio, when he wished to open the gates of Carthage, to use as a key the herb *æthiopis,* because the herb *æthiopis* has not the property of breaking locks."

"I merely said that he would have done better to have used the herb *lunaria.*"

"That is a matter of opinion," murmured Rhadamanthus, touched in his turn.

And the man of history was silent.

The theologian, Minos, having recovered consciousness, questioned Ursus anew. He had had time to consult his notes.

"You have classed orpiment among the products of arsenic, and you have said that it is a poison. The Bible denies this."

"The Bible denies, but arsenic affirms it," sighed Ursus.

The man whom Ursus called Æacus, and who was the representative of medicine, had not yet spoken; but now looking down on Ursus, with proudly half-closed eyes, he said, "The answer is not without some show of reason."

Ursus thanked him with his most cringing smile.

Minos frowned frightfully. "I resume," he said. "You have said that it is false that the basilisk is the king of serpents, under the name of cockatrice."

"Very reverend sir," said Ursus, "so little did I desire to insult the basilisk that I have given out as certain that it has a man's head."

"Be it so," replied Minos, severely; "but you added that Poerius had seen one with the head of a falcon. Can you prove it?"

"Not easily," said Ursus.

Here he had lost a little ground. Minos, seizing the advantage, pushed it:—

"You have said that a converted Jew has not a nice smell."

"Yes. But I added that a Christian who becomes a Jew has a nasty one."

Minos again cast his eyes over the accusing documents. "You have affirmed and propagated things which are impossible. You have said that Ælian had seen an elephant write sentences."

"Nay, very reverend gentlemen! I simply said that Oppian had heard an hippopotamus discuss a philosophical problem."

"You have declared that it is not true that a dish made of beech-wood will become covered of itself with all the viands that one can desire."

"I said that if it has this virtue, it must be that you received it from the devil."

"That I received it!"

"No, most reverend sir. I, nobody, everybody!"

Aside, Ursus thought, "I don't know what I am saying." But his confusion, though extreme, was not visible outwardly, so bravely did he struggle against it.

"All this," Minos resumed, "implies a certain belief in the devil."

Ursus held his own. "Very reverend sir, I am not an unbeliever with regard to the devil. Belief in the devil follows from faith in God. The one proves the

other. He who does not believe a little in the devil does not believe much in God. He who believes in the sun must believe in the shadow. The devil is the night of God. What is night? The proof of day."

Ursus here extemporized a fathomless combination of philosophy and religion. Minos remained pensive, and relapsed into silence. Ursus breathed again.

A sharp onslaught now took place. Æacus, the medical delegate, who had disdainfully protected Ursus against the theologian, now suddenly turned from auxiliary into assailant. He placed his closed fist on his bundle of papers, which was large and heavy, and Ursus received this apostrophe full in the breast:—

"It is proved that crystal is sublimated ice, and that the diamond is sublimated crystal. It is averred that ice becomes crystal in a thousand years, and crystal diamond in a thousand ages. You have denied this."

"Nay," replied Ursus, with sadness. "I only said that in a thousand years ice had time to melt, and that a thousand ages were difficult to count."

The examination went on; questions and answers clashed like swords.

"You have denied that plants can talk."

"Not at all; but to do so they must grow under a gibbet."

"Do you admit that the mandragora cries?"

"No; but it sings."

"You have denied that the fourth finger of the left hand has any specific virtue."

"I only said that to sneeze to the left was a bad sign."

"You have spoken rashly and disrespectfully of the phœnix."

"Learned judge, I merely said that when he wrote that the brain of the phœnix was a delicate morsel, but

that it produced headache, Plutarch was a little out of his reckoning, inasmuch as the phœnix never existed."

"A detestable speech. The cinnamalker, which makes its nest with sticks of cinnamon, the rhintacus that Parysatis used in the manufacture of her poisons, the manucodiatas which is the bird of paradise, and the semenda, which has a beak with three holes, have been mistaken for the phœnix; but the phœnix has existed."

"I do not deny it."

"You are a stupid ass."

"I desire to be thought no better."

"You have confessed that the elder-tree cures the quinsy, but you added that it was not because it has a fairy excrescence at its root."

"I said it was because Judas hung himself on an elder-tree."

"A plausible opinion," growled the theologian, glad to strike his little blow at Æacus.

Arrogance repulsed soon turns to anger. Æacus was enraged.

"Strolling mountebank! your mind wanders as much as your feet. Your doctrines are not only startling but extremely suspicious in their nature. You are the next thing to a sorcerer. You have dealings with unknown animals. You speak to the populace of things that exist but for you alone, and the nature of which is unknown, such as the hœmorrhoüs."

"The hœmorrhoüs is a viper which was seen by Tremellius."

This repartee produced a certain disorder in the irritated science of Doctor Æacus.

Ursus added: "The existence of the hœmorrhoüs is quite as true as that of the odoriferous hyæna, and of the civet described by Castellus."

Æacus got out of the difficulty by charging home:

"Here are your own words, and very diabolical words they are. Listen." With his eye on his notes, Æacus read: "Two plants, the thalagssigle and the aglaphotis, are luminous in the evening, flowers by day, stars by night." And looking steadily at Ursus: "What have you to say to that?"

Ursus answered: "Every plant is a lamp. Its perfume is its light."

Æacus turned over other pages. "You have denied that the vesicles of the otter are equivalent to castoreum."

"I merely said that perhaps it may be necessary to receive the teaching of Aëtius on this point with some reserve."

Æacus became furious. "You practise medicine?"

"I practise medicine," sighed Ursus, timidly.

"On living things?"

"Rather than on dead ones," said Ursus.

Ursus defended himself stoutly, but dully, — an admirable mixture, in which meekness predominated. He spoke with such gentleness that Doctor Æacus felt that he must insult him.

"What are you murmuring there?" said he, rudely.

Ursus was amazed, and restricted himself to saying, "Murmurings are for the young, and moans for the aged. Alas, I moan!"

Æacus replied: "Be assured of this: if you attend a sick person, and he dies, you will be punished by death."

Ursus hazarded a question. "And if he gets well?"

"In that case," said the doctor, lowering his voice, "you will also be punished by death."

"There is very little difference," said Ursus.

The doctor replied: "If death ensues, we punish gross ignorance; if recovery, we punish presumption. The gibbet in either case."

"I was ignorant of the fact," murmured Ursus. "I thank you for informing me. One does not know all the beauties of the law."

"Take care of yourself."

"Religiously," said Ursus.

"We know what you are about."

"As for me," thought Ursus, "that is more than I always know myself."

"We could send you to prison."

"I see that perfectly, gentlemen."

"You cannot deny your infractions nor your encroachments."

"My philosophy asks pardon."

"Great audacity has been attributed to you."

"That is quite a mistake."

"It is said that you have cured the sick."

"I am the victim of calumny."

The three pairs of eyebrows which were so horribly fixed on Ursus contracted. The three wise faces drew near to one another, and whispered. Ursus had a vision of a shadowy fool's cap sketched above those three august heads. The low whispering of the trio was of some minutes' duration, during which time Ursus felt all the chill and all the scorch of agony. At length Minos, who was president, turned to him and said angrily:

"Go away!"

Ursus felt something like Jonas when he was leaving the belly of the whale.

Minos continued: "You are discharged."

Ursus said to himself: "They won't catch me at this again. Good-bye, medicine!" And he added, in his innermost heart: "Henceforth I will carefully allow them to die."

Bent double, he bowed to everything,— to the doctors, the busts, the tables, the walls,— and retiring backwards

through the door, disappeared almost like a shadow melting into air. He left the hall slowly, like an innocent man, and rushed up the street rapidly like a guilty one. Officers of justice are so singular and obscure in their ways that even when one is acquitted, one flies from them.

As he fled, Ursus mumbled, "I am well out of it. I am the savant untamed; they the savants civilized. Doctors cavil at the learned. False science is the excrement of the true, and is employed to the destruction of philosophers. Philosophers, when they produce sophists, produce their own scourge. Of the dung of the thrush is born the mistletoe, of which is made the birdlime with which the thrush is captured. *Turdus sibi malum cacat.*"

We do not represent Ursus as a refined man. He had the effrontery to use the words which expressed his thoughts. He had no better taste than Voltaire.

When Ursus returned to the Green Box he told Master Nicless that he had been delayed by following a pretty woman, and let not a word escape him concerning his adventure, — except in the evening, when he said in a low voice to Homo: "See here, I have vanquished the three heads of Cerberus."

CHAPTER VII.

WHY SHOULD A GOLD PIECE LOWER ITSELF BY MIXING WITH A HEAP OF PENNIES?

A GREAT event happened.

The Tadcaster Inn had become more and more a maelstrom of joy and laughter. Never was there such resonant gaiety. The landlord and his boy were not able to draw all the ale, stout, and porter. In the evening in the lower room, with its windows all aglow, there was not a vacant table. They sang, they shouted; the huge fireplace, vaulted like an oven, with its iron bars piled with logs, shone out brightly. It was like a house of fire and noise.

In the yard — that is to say, in the theatre — the crowd was greater still. Crowds as great as Southwark could supply so thronged the performances of "Chaos Vanquished" that directly the curtain was raised (that is to say, the platform of the Green Box was lowered) every place was filled. The windows were alive with spectators, the balcony was crammed. Not a single stone was to be seen in the courtyard. It seemed to be paved with faces. Only the compartment for the nobility remained empty. There was thus a vacant space in the centre of the balcony; crowds everywhere except in that one spot. But one evening that also was occupied.

It was on a Saturday, a day on which the English make all haste to amuse themselves before the *ennui* of

Sunday. The hall was full. We say "hall;" Shakspeare for a long time had to use the yard of an inn for a theatre, and he called it "hall." Just as the curtain rose on the prologue of "Chaos Vanquished," with Ursus, Homo, and Gwynplaine on the stage, Ursus, from habit, cast a look at the audience, and experienced quite a shock.

The compartment for the nobility was occupied. A lady was sitting in the middle of the box, on the Utrecht velvet arm-chair. She was alone, and yet she filled the box. Some beings seem to emit light. This lady, like Dea, had a light within herself, but a light of an entirely different character. Dea was pale, this lady was rosy; Dea was the twilight, this lady was Aurora; Dea was beautiful, this lady was superb. Dea was innocence, candour, fairness, alabaster; this woman was of the purple, and one felt that she did not fear the blush. Her irradiation overflowed the box; she sat in the midst of it, immovable, with all the pervading majesty of an idol. Amid the sordid crowd she shone out grandly, as with the radiance of a carbuncle. She inundated it with so much light that she drowned it in shadow, and all the mean faces in it underwent eclipse. Her splendour blotted out everything else. Every eye was turned towards her. Tom-Jim-Jack was in the crowd; he was lost like the rest in the nimbus of this dazzling creature.

The lady at first so absorbed the attention of the public who had crowded to the performance that she rather diminished the opening effects of "Chaos Vanquished." Despite the air of dreamland about her, to those who were near she was a woman; perchance, too much a woman. She was tall and amply formed, and showed as much as possible of her magnificent person. She wore heavy earrings of pearls, with which were mixed those

whimsical jewels called "keys of England." Her upper dress was of Indian muslin, embroidered all over with gold, — a great luxury, because those muslin dresses then cost six hundred crowns. A large diamond brooch fastened her corsage, the which she wore so as to display her shoulders and bosom, in the immodest fashion of the time; her chemisette was made of that lawn of which Anne of Austria had sheets so fine that they could be passed through a finger-ring. She wore what looked like a cuirass of rubies (some uncut, but polished), and precious stones were sewn all over the body of her dress. Then, her eyebrows were blackened with India ink; and her arms, elbows, shoulders, chin, and nostrils, with the top of her eyelids, the lobes of her ears, the palms of her hands, the tips of her fingers, were tinted with a glowing and provoking touch of colour. Above all, she wore an expression of implacable determination to be beautiful that amounted almost to ferocity. She was like a panther, with the power of turning cat at will, and caressing. One of her eyes was blue, the other black. Gwynplaine, as well as Ursus, contemplated her with wonder. The Green Box somewhat resembled a phantasmagoria in its representations. "Chaos Vanquished" was rather a dream than a piece; it generally produced on the audience the effect of a vision. Now, this effect was reflected on the actors. The house took the performers by surprise, and they were thunderstruck in their turn. It was a rebound of fascination. The woman watched them, and they watched her. At the distance at which they were placed, and in that luminous mist which is the half-light of a theatre, details were lost, and it was like an hallucination.

Of course it was a woman, but was it not a chimera as well? The penetration of such dazzling light into their obscurity stupefied them. It was like the appear-

ance of an unknown planet. It came from the world of the great and prosperous. Irradiation amplified her figure. The lady was covered with nocturnal glitterings, like the milky way. Her precious stones were stars. The diamond brooch was perhaps a pleiad. The splendid beauty of her bosom seemed supernatural. They felt, as they looked upon the star-like creature, the momentary but thrilling approach of the regions of felicity. It was out of the heights of a paradise that she leaned towards their insignificant Green Box, and revealed to the gaze of its wretched audience an expression of inexorable serenity. As she satisfied her unbounded curiosity, she fed at the same time the curiosity of the public. It was the Zenith permitting the Abyss to look at it. Ursus, Gwynplaine, Vinos, Fibi, the crowd, every one had succumbed to her dazzling beauty, except Dea, ignorant in her darkness. An apparition was indeed before them; but none of the ideas usually evoked by the word were realized in the lady's appearance. There was nothing diaphanous, nothing undecided, nothing floating, no mist about her. She was a goddess; rose-coloured and fresh, and full of health. Yet, under the optical condition in which Ursus and Gwynplaine were placed, she looked like a vision. There are fleshy phantoms, called vampires. Such a queen as she, though a spirit to the crowd, requires twelve hundred thousand a year, to keep her in health.

Behind the lady, in the shadow, stood her page, *el mozo*, a child-like youth, fair and pretty, with a serious face. A very young and very grave servant was the fashion of that period. This page was dressed from top to toe in scarlet velvet, and had on his skull-cap, which was embroidered with gold, a bunch of curled feathers. This was the sign of a high class of service, and indi-

cated attendance on a very great lady. The lackey is a part of his lord, and one could hardly fail to notice this train-bearing page in the shadow of his mistress. Memory often takes notes unconsciously; and, without Gwynplaine's suspecting it, the round cheeks, the serious mien, the embroidered and plumed cap of the lady's page left some trace upon his mind. The page, however, did nothing to call attention to himself. To do so is to be wanting in respect. He held himself aloof and passive at the back of the box, retiring as far as the closed door permitted. Notwithstanding the presence of her train-bearer, the lady was not the less alone in the compartment, since a valet counts for nothing.

Powerful as was the diversion created by this great personage, the *dénouement* of "Chaos Vanquished" proved more powerful still. The impression which it made was, as usual, irresistible. Perhaps there was even an increase of magnetic attraction in the hall by reason of the radiant spectator, for not infrequently the spectator forms a part of the spectacle. The contagion of Gwynplaine's laugh was more triumphant than ever. The whole audience relapsed into an indescribable fit of hilarity, through which could be distinguished the sonorous and magisterial ha! ha! of Tom-Jim-Jack. The unknown lady alone gazed at the performance with the immobility of a statue; even with her eyes, which were like those of a phantom, she smiled not. A spectre, but sun-born.

The performance over, the platform drawn up, and the family reassembled in the Green Box, Ursus opened and emptied on the supper-table the bag of receipts. From a heap of pennies there slid suddenly forth a Spanish gold onza.

"Hers!" cried Ursus.

The onza amid the verdigris-covered pennies was a type of the lady amid the crowd.

"She paid an onza for her seat," cried Ursus, with enthusiasm.

Just then the hotel-keeper entered the Green Box, and passing his arm out of the window at the back of it, opened the loop-hole in the wall of which we have already spoken, which gave a view over the field, and which was level with the window, then he made a silent sign to Ursus to look out. A carriage, swarming with plumed footmen carrying torches and magnificently appointed, was driving off at a fast trot.

Ursus took the piece of gold between his forefinger and thumb respectfully, and showing it to Master Nicless, said, "She is a goddess." Then, his eyes falling on the carriage which was about to turn the corner of the field, and on the imperial where the footmen's torches lighted up a golden coronet, with eight strawberry leaves, he exclaimed, "She is more,—she is a duchess!"

The carriage disappeared. The rumbling of its wheels died away in the distance. Ursus remained some moments lost in ecstasy, holding the gold piece between his finger and thumb, elevating it as the priest elevates the host. Then he placed it on the table, and, as he contemplated it, began to talk of "Madam."

"She was a duchess," the inn-keeper assured him. Yes. They knew her title. But her name? Of that they were ignorant. Master Nicless had been close to the carriage, and had seen the coat-of-arms, and the footmen covered with lace. The coachman had on a wig which might have belonged to a Lord Chancellor. The carriage was of that rare design called in Spain *coche-tumbon*, a splendid build, with a rounding top, which makes a magnificent support for a coronet. The page

was a man in miniature, so small that he could sit on the step of the carriage outside the door. The duty of those pretty creatures was to bear the trains of their mistresses. They also delivered their messages. And did you notice the plumed cap of the page? How grand it was! You pay a fine if you wear those plumes without the right to do so. Master Nicless had seen the lady, too, quite close. A kind of queen. Such wealth gives beauty. The skin is whiter, the eye more proud, the gait more noble, and the grace more insolent. Nothing can equal the elegant impertinence of hands that never toil. Master Nicless went into ecstasies over the magnificence of the white skin with the blue veins, the neck, shoulders, and arms, the touch of paint everywhere, the pearl earrings, the head-dress, powdered with gold; the profusion of precious stones, the rubies and diamonds.

"Less brilliant than her eyes," murmured Ursus.

Gwynplaine said nothing.

Dea listened.

"And do you know," said the tavern-keeper, "the most wonderful thing of all?"

"What?" said Ursus.

"I saw her get into her carriage."

"What then?"

"She did not get in alone."

"Nonsense!"

"Some one got in with her."

"Who?"

"Guess."

"The king," said Ursus.

"In the first place," said Master Nicless, "there is no king at present. We are not living under a king. Guess who got into the carriage with the duchess."

"Jupiter," said Ursus.

"Tom-Jim-Jack!" the hotel-keeper replied.

Gwynplaine, who had not said a word, broke silence, "Tom-Jim-Jack!" he cried.

There was a pause of astonishment, during which the low voice of Dea was heard to say, "Cannot this woman be prevented from coming?"

CHAPTER VIII.

SYMPTOMS OF POISONING.

THE duchess did not return. She did not reappear in the theatre, but she reappeared in the recesses of Gwynplaine's memory.

Gwynplaine was, to a certain degree, troubled. It seemed to him that for the first time in his life he had seen a woman. He made that first stumble, a strange dream. We should beware of the nature of the reveries in which we indulge. Reverie is imbued with all the mystery and subtlety of an odour. It is to thought what perfume is to the tuberose. It is at times the exudation of a venomous idea, which penetrates like a vapour. You may poison yourself with reveries, as with flowers, — an intoxicating suicide, exquisite and malignant. The suicide of the soul is evil thought. In it lurks a deadly poison. Reverie entices, cajoles, lures, entwines, and finally makes you its accomplice. It makes you in part accountable for the trickeries which it plays on conscience. It charms; then it corrupts you. We may say of reverie as of play, — one begins by being a dupe, and ends by being a cheat.

Gwynplaine dreamed. He had never before seen Woman. He had seen the shadow in the women of the populace, and he had seen the soul in Dea. He had just seen the reality. A warm and living skin, under which one felt the circulation of passionate blood; a contour with the precision of marble and the undulation

of the wave; a haughty and impassive mien, combining coldness with provocation, and evidently content in its own glory; hair the colour of the reflection from a furnace; a splendour of adornment producing in herself and in others a thrill of voluptuousness; the half-revealed nudity betraying a disdainful desire to be coveted at a distance by the crowd; an inextinguishable coquetry; the charm of impenetrability; a temptation heightened by the zest which always attaches to that which is forbidden; a promise to the senses and a menace to the soul, and a two-fold fascination,— one desire; the other, fear: he had just seen all these things. He had just seen Woman. The mystery of sex had just been revealed to him.

And where? On inaccessible heights. At an infinite distance. O mocking destiny! The soul, that celestial essence, he possessed; he had it in his grasp, — it was Dea. Sex, that thing of the earth earthy, he perceived in the heights of heaven,— in that woman. A duchess! "More than a goddess," Ursus had said. What a precipice. Even dreams recoiled before such a wild flight as this.

Was Gwynplaine going to commit the folly of dreaming about the unknown beauty? He debated with himself. He recalled all that Ursus had said of these almost royal personages. The philosopher's disquisitions, which had hitherto seemed so useless, now became subjects for meditation. A very thin layer of forgetfulness often coats our memory, through which at times we catch a glimpse of all beneath it. His fancy ran on that august world, the peerage, to which the lady belonged, and which was placed so immeasurably above the inferior world, the common people, of which he was one. And was he one of the common people even? Was not he, the mountebank, below the lowest of the

low? For the first time since he had arrived at the age of reflection, he felt his heart oppressed by a consciousness of his baseness,— or rather of that which we nowadays call abasement. The descriptions and enumerations of Ursus, his lyrical inventories, his rhapsodies over castles, parks, fountains, and colonnades, his catalogues of art treasures and estates, all recurred vividly to Gwynplaine's mind. He was possessed with the image of this zenith. That a man should be a lord! — it seemed chimerical. It was so, however. Incredible thing! There were lords! But were they of flesh and blood, like himself? It seemed doubtful. He felt that he was in the depths of shadow, encompassed by a wall, but he could just discern in the distance above his head, through the mouth of the pit, that dazzling confusion of azure, of figures and of rays, which constitutes Olympus. In the midst of this glory the duchess shone resplendent.

Gwynplaine felt for this woman a strange, inexpressible longing, combined with a conviction of the impossibility of attainment. This poignant contradiction recurred to his mind again and again, notwithstanding every effort. He saw near to him, even within his reach, in close and tangible reality, the soul; and in the unattainable,— in the depths of the ideal world, — the flesh. None of these thoughts attained definite shape. They were like a vapour within him, changing every instant in form, and floating away. Luckily for him, he did not form even in his dreams any hope of reaching the heights where the duchess dwelt. The vibration of such ladders of fancy, if ever we set our foot upon them, may unsettle our brains forever; intending to scale Olympus, we reach Bedlam. Any distinct feeling of actual desire would have terrified Gwynplaine however. He entertained none of that nature. Besides, was he likely ever to see the lady again? Most proba-

bly not. To fall in love with a passing light on the horizon, madness cannot reach to that pitch. To cast adoring glances at a star even, is not incomprehensible. It may be seen again, it reappears, it is fixed in the sky. But can any one be enamoured of a flash of lightning? Dreams came and went within him. The beautiful and majestic occupant of the box had imparted a strange radiance to his wandering thoughts. He thought of her, resolved to think of other things, then began to think of her again.

Gwynplaine was unable to sleep for several nights. Insomnia is as full of dreams as sleep. It is almost impossible to describe exactly the workings of the brain. The trouble with words is that they are more marked in form than in meaning. All ideas have indistinct boundary lines, words have not. Certain phases of the soul cannot be described. Expression has its limits, thought has not. The depths of our secret souls are so vast that Gwynplaine's dreams scarcely touched Dea. Dea reigned supreme in his inmost soul; nothing could approach her. Still (for such contradictions make up the soul of man), there was a conflict going on within him. Was he conscious of it? Scarcely. In his heart of hearts he was a prey to conflicting hopes and desires. We all have our moments of weakness. The nature of this conflict would have been clear to Ursus; but to Gwynplaine it was not. Two instincts — one the ideal, the other sexual — were struggling within him. Such contests occur between the angels of light and darkness on the edge of the abyss.

At length the angel of darkness was overthrown. One day Gwynplaine ceased to think of the unknown woman. A struggle between right and wrong — a duel between his earthly and his heavenly nature — had taken place within his soul, and at such a depth that he had un-

derstood it but dimly. One thing was certain,— he had never for one moment ceased to adore Dea. He had been attacked by a violent disorder, his blood had been fevered; but it was over. Dea was his only thought now. Gwynplaine would have been much astonished had any one told him that Dea had been in danger, even for a moment; and in a week or two the phantom which had threatened the souls of both had faded away.

Besides, we have just said that "the duchess" did not return. Ursus thought that very natural. "The lady with the gold piece" is a phenomenon. She enters, pays, and vanishes. It would be too much joy were she to return.

As for Dea, she made no allusion to the woman who had appeared only to disappear. She was sufficiently enlightened, perhaps, by the sighs of Ursus, and now and then by some significant exclamation, such as, "One does not get ounces of gold every day." She never spoke of "that woman." This showed deep instinct. The soul takes many precautions in secrets which it does not even admit to be secrets. To be silent about any one seems to keep them afar off. One seems to fear that questions may call them back. We put silence between us, as if we were shutting a door.

So the incident sank into oblivion. Was it anything, after all? Had it ever occurred? Could it be said that a shadow had floated between Gwynplaine and Dea? Dea did not know it, nor did Gwynplaine. No; nothing had occurred. The duchess herself was blurred in the distant perspective like an illusion. It had been but a momentary dream, out of which Gwynplaine had speedily wakened. When it fades away, a reverie, like mist, leaves no trace behind; and when the cloud has passed, love shines out as brightly in the heart as the sun in the sky.

CHAPTER IX.

ABYSSUS ABYSSUM VOCAT.

ANOTHER face had disappeared,—Tom-Jim-Jack's. He had suddenly ceased to frequent the Tadcaster Inn.

Persons so situated as to be able to observe phases of fashionable life in London, might have seen about this time that the "Weekly Gazette" announced the departure of Lord David Dirry-Moir, by order of her Majesty, to take command of his frigate in the white squadron then cruising off the coast of Holland.

Ursus was much troubled by Tom-Jim-Jack's absence. He had not seen the sailor since the day on which he had driven off in the same carriage with the lady of the gold piece. It was, indeed, an enigma who this Tom-Jim-Jack who carried off duchesses under his arm could be. What an interesting investigation! What questions to propound! What things to be said! Therefore Ursus said not a word.

Ursus, who had had experience, knew the smart caused by rash curiosity. Curiosity ought always to be proportioned to the rank of the curious. By listening, we risk our ear; by watching, we risk our eye. Prudent people neither hear nor see. Tom-Jim-Jack had got into a princely carriage. The tavern-keeper had seen him. It appeared so extraordinary that the sailor should sit by the lady that it made Ursus circumspect. The caprices of those in high life should be sacred to the

lower orders. The reptiles called the poor had best keep quiet in their holes when they see anything out of the way. Quiescence is a power. Shut your eyes, if you have not the luck to be blind; stop up your ears, if you have not the good fortune to be deaf; hold your tongue, if you have not the good fortune to be mute. The great do what they like, the humble what they can. Let the mysterious pass unnoticed. Do not annoy the gods and goddesses. Do not interrogate appearances. Have a profound respect for idols. Do not gossip about the lessenings or increasings which take place in the upper regions, or about motives of which we are ignorant. Such things are mostly optical delusions to us inferior creatures. Metamorphoses are the business of the gods; the transformations and disorders of great persons who float above us are difficult to comprehend, and perilous to study. Too much attention irritates the Olympians engaged in their gyrations of amusement or fancy, and a thunderbolt may teach you that the bull you are too curiously examining is Jupiter. Do not lift the folds of the stone-coloured mantles of those terrible powers. Indifference is the truest wisdom. Do not stir, and you will be safe. Feign death, and they will not kill you. Therein lies the wisdom of the insect. Ursus practised it.

The tavern-keeper, who was puzzled as well, questioned Ursus one day. "Do you notice that Tom-Jim-Jack never comes here now?"

"Indeed!" said Ursus. "I had not remarked it."

Master Nicless made an observation in an undertone, no doubt touching on the intimacy between the ducal carriage and Tom-Jim-Jack, — a remark which, as it might have been irreverent and dangerous, Ursus took good care not to hear.

Still, Ursus was too much of an artist not to regret

Tom-Jim-Jack. He felt some disappointment. He told his feelings to Homo, of whose discretion alone he felt certain. He whispered into the ear of the wolf: "Since Tom-Jim-Jack has ceased to come, I feel a blank as a man, and a chill as a poet." This outpouring of his heart to a friend relieved Ursus. His lips were sealed before Gwynplaine, who, however, made no allusion to Tom-Jim-Jack. The fact was that Tom-Jim-Jack's presence or absence mattered little to Gwynplaine, absorbed as he was in Dea.

Forgetfulness fell more and more on Gwynplaine. As for Dea, she had not even suspected the existence of a vague trouble. At the same time, no more cabals or complaints against the Laughing Man were spoken of. Hate seemed to have let go its hold. All was tranquil in and around the Green Box. No more opposition from strollers, merry-andrews, nor priests; no more grumbling outside. Their success was unclouded. Destiny allows of such sudden serenity. The brilliant happiness of Gwynplaine and Dea was for the present absolutely cloudless. Little by little it had risen to a degree which admitted of no increase. There is one word which expresses the situation, — apogee. Happiness, like the sea, has its high tide. The worst thing for the perfectly happy is that it recedes.

There are two ways of being inaccessible, — being too high and being too low. At least as much, perhaps, as the first, is the second to be desired. More surely than the eagle escapes the arrow, the animalcule escapes being crushed. This security of insignificance, if it had ever existed on earth, was enjoyed by Gwynplaine and Dea, and never before had it been so complete. They lived on, daily more and more ecstatically wrapt in each other. The heart saturates itself with love as with a divine salt that preserves it, and from this arises the

incorruptible constancy of those who have loved each other from the dawn of their lives, and the affection which keeps its freshness in old age. There is such a thing as the embalmment of the heart. It is of Daphnis and Chloe that Philemon and Baucis are made. The old age, of which we speak, evening resembling morning, was evidently reserved for Gwynplaine and Dea. In the mean time they were young.

Ursus watched this love affair as a doctor watches a case. He had what was termed in those days a hippocratic expression of countenance. He fixed his sagacious eyes on Dea, so fragile and pale, and growled out, "It is lucky that she is happy." At other times he said, "It is fortunate for her health's sake." He shook his head, and at times read attentively the chapters treating of heart-disease in Avicenna, translated by Vopiscus Fortunatus, Louvain, 1650, an old worm-eaten book of his.

Dea, when fatigued, suffered much from perspirations and drowsiness, and took a daily *siesta*, as we have already said. One day, while she was lying asleep on the bearskin, and Gwynplaine was out, Ursus bent down softly and applied his ear to Dea's heart. He seemed to listen for a few minutes, and then stood up, murmuring, "She must not have any shock. It would be sure to go to the weak spot."

The crowd continued to flock to the performances of "Chaos Vanquished." The success of the Laughing Man seemed inexhaustible. Every one rushed to see him, — not from Southwark only, but even from other parts of London. The general public began to mingle with the usual audience, which no longer consisted exclusively of sailors and drivers. In the opinion of Master Nicless, who was familiar with crowds, there were many gentlemen and baronets disguised as common people in this one. Disguise is one of the chief amusements of the

DEA.

great, and was greatly in fashion at that period. This admixture of an aristocratic element with the mob was a good sign, and showed that the popularity of the show was extending to London. The fame of Gwynplaine must have penetrated into the great world. Such was the fact. Nothing was talked of but the Laughing Man. He was the subject of comment even at the Mohawk Club, frequented by noblemen.

The inmates of the Green Box had no idea of all this. They were content to be happy. It was bliss to Dea to touch, as she did every evening, the crisp, tawny locks of Gwynplaine. In love there is nothing like habit. The whole of life is concentrated in it. The reappearance of the stars is the custom of the universe. Creation is nothing but a mistress, and the sun a lover. Light is a dazzling caryatide supporting the world. Every day, for one sublime moment, the earth shrouded by night rests on the rising sun. Dea, blind, felt a similar return of warmth and hope within her when she placed her hand on Gwynplaine's head. To adore each other in seclusion, to love in the plenitude of silence,—who would not be reconciled to such an eternity?

One evening Gwynplaine, feeling within him that overflow of felicity, which like the intoxication of perfumes causes a sort of delicious faintness, was strolling, as he usually did after the performance, in the meadow a few hundred yards from the Green Box. Sometimes in those high tides of feeling in our souls we feel that we would fain pour out the sensations of the overflowing heart. The night was dark but clear. The stars were shining. The whole fair-ground was deserted. Sleep and forgetfulness reigned in the vans which were scattered over the Tarrinzeau Field. One light alone was unextinguished. It was a lamp at the Tadcaster Inn, the door of which was left ajar to admit Gwynplaine on his return.

Midnight had just struck in the five parishes of Southwark, with the different intervals and tones of their various bells. Gwynplaine was dreaming of Dea. Of whom else should he dream? But that evening, feeling singularly troubled, and full of a charm which was at the same time a pang, he was thinking of Dea as a man thinks of a woman. He reproached himself for this. It seemed to be a lack of respect to her. Sweet and imperious impatience! He was crossing the invisible barrier, on one side of which stands the virgin, on the other, the wife. He questioned himself anxiously. A blush, as it were, overspread his mind. The Gwynplaine of long ago had been transformed by degrees and unconsciously. The modest youth was becoming strangely agitated. We have an ear of light, into which the spirit speaks; and an ear of darkness, into which the instinct speaks. Into the latter strange voices were now whispering. However pure-minded the youth may be who dreams of love, a certain grossness of the flesh eventually comes between him and his dream. Intentions lose their transparency. The secret desires implanted by nature will make themselves heard. Gwynplaine felt an indescribable yearning of the flesh, and Dea was scarcely flesh. In this fever, which he knew to be unhealthy, he transfigured Dea into a more material aspect, and tried to exaggerate her seraphic form into feminine loveliness. It is thou, O woman, that we require.

Love will not permit too much of paradise. It requires the fevered skin, the troubled life, the unbound hair, the electrical and irreparable kiss, the clasp of desire. The sidereal is embarrassing, the ethereal is cumbersome. Too much of the heavenly in love is like too much fuel on a fire,—the flame suffers from it. Gwynplaine fell into an exquisite reverie,—Dea to be

clasped in his arms! Dea clasped in them! He heard nature in his heart crying out for her. Like a Pygmalion modelling a Galatea out of the azure, in the depth of his soul he retouched the chaste outlines of Dea's form,—outlines with too much of heaven, too little of Eden about them; for Eden is Eve, and Eve was a female, a carnal mother, a terrestrial nurse, the sacred womb of future generations, the breast of unfailing milk, the rocker of the cradle of the new-born world: and wings are incompatible with the bosom of woman. Virginity is but the hope of maternity.

Still, in Gwynplaine's dreams heretofore, Dea had been enthroned above flesh. Now, however, he made wild efforts in thought to draw her downwards by that thread, sex, which binds every girl to earth. Not one of these birds is free. Dea was not exempt from this law, surely; and Gwynplaine, though he scarcely acknowledged it, felt a vague desire that she should submit to it. This desire possessed him in spite of himself, and with an ever-recurring persistency. He pictured Dea as woman. He came to the point of regarding her under a hitherto unheard-of form,—as a creature no longer of ecstasy alone, but of voluptuousness as well. He was ashamed of this visionary desecration. It was like an attempt at profanation. He resisted its assault. He turned from it, but it returned again and again. He felt as if he were committing a criminal assault. To him, Dea was encompassed as by a cloud.

It was in April, when even the spine has its dreams. He rambled on with an uncertain step in the solitude. To have no one by is an incentive to wander. Whither flew his thoughts? He would not have dared to own it to himself. To heaven? No, and yet you were looking down on him, O ye stars!

Why talk of a man in love? Rather say a man

possessed. To be possessed by the devil is the exception; to be possessed by a woman, the rule. Every man has to bear this alienation of himself. What a sorceress a pretty woman is! The true name of love is captivity. Man is made prisoner by the soul of a woman, and by her flesh as well, — sometimes even more by the flesh than by the soul. The soul is the true-love; the flesh, the mistress. We slander the devil. It was not he who tempted Eve. It was Eve who tempted him. The woman began it; Lucifer was passing by quietly. He perceived the woman, and became Satan. The flesh is the covering of the soul. It entices, strange to say, by its very modesty. Nothing could be more distracting. It is full of shame, the hussy!

It was passion rather than love which was then agitating Gwynplaine, and holding him in its power. What dark things lurk beneath the fairness of Venus! Something within him was calling aloud for Dea, — Dea the maiden, Dea the other half of a man, Dea flesh and flame! This cry was almost driving away the angel. Mysterious crisis through which all love must pass, and in which the Ideal is imperilled. Moment of heavenly corruption! Gwynplaine's love of Dea was becoming nuptial. Virgin love is but a transition. The moment was come. Gwynplaine coveted the woman. He coveted a woman! Precipice of which one sees but the first gentle slope. Luckily, there was no woman for Gwynplaine but Dea. The only one he desired. The only one who could desire him.

Gwynplaine felt that vague and mighty tremour which is the vital claim of infinity. Besides, there was the aggravation of the spring. He was breathing the nameless odours of the starry darkness. He walked on with a feeling of wild delight. The wandering perfumes of the rising sap, the soft irradiations which float

in shadow, the distant opening of nocturnal flowers, the complicity of little hidden nests, the murmurs of waters and of leaves, soft sighs rising from all things, the freshness, the warmth, and the mysterious awakening of April and May, is the vast diffusion of sex murmuring in whispers their proposals of voluptuousness, till the soul reels beneath the temptation to which it is subjected. Any one seeing Gwynplaine walk, would have said, "Look at that drunken man." He almost staggered under the weight of his own emotions, of the springtime influence, and of the night.

The solitude in the bowling-green was so peaceful that at times Gwynplaine spoke aloud. The consciousness that there is no listener induces speech. He walked with slow steps, his head bent down, his hands behind him, the left hand in the right, the fingers open. Suddenly he felt something slipped between his fingers. He turned round quickly. In his hand was a paper, and in front of him a man. It was this man who, coming up behind him with the stealthy tread of a cat, had placed the paper in his fingers. The paper was a letter. This man, whom he saw quite clearly in the starlight, was small, chubby-cheeked, young, sedate, and dressed in a scarlet livery, exposed from top to toe through the opening of a long grey cloak, then called a capenoche,— a Spanish word contracted; in French it was *cape-de-nuit.* His head was covered by a crimson cap, like the skull-cap of a cardinal, on which servitude was indicated by a strip of lace. On this cap was a plume of tisserin feathers. He stood motionless before Gwynplaine, like a dark outline in a dream.

Gwynplaine recognized the duchess's page. Before he could utter an exclamation of surprise, he heard the thin voice of the page, at once child-like and feminine in its tone, saying to him:—

"At this hour to-morrow, be at the corner of London Bridge. I will be there to conduct you — "

"Whither?" demanded Gwynplaine.

"Where you are expected."

Gwynplaine glanced down at the letter, which he was holding mechanically in his hand. When he looked up, the page was no longer near him. He perceived a shadowy form rapidly disappearing in the distance. It was the little valet. He turned the corner of the street, and solitude reigned again. When Gwynplaine saw the page vanish, he again looked at the letter. There are moments in our lives when what happens seems but the figment of a dream. Surprise keeps us for a moment oblivious to the real facts.

Gwynplaine raised the letter, as if to read it, but soon perceived that he could not do so for two reasons, — first, because he had not broken the seal; and, secondly, because it was too dark. It was some minutes before he remembered that there was a lamp at the inn. He took a few steps sideways, as if he knew not whither he was going. A somnambulist to whom a phantom had just given a letter might walk as he did. At last he made up his mind. He ran, rather than walked, towards the inn, paused in the light which streamed through the half-open door, and again examined the closed letter by it. There was no design on the seal, and on the envelope was written, "*To Gwynplaine.*" He broke the seal, tore open the envelope, unfolded the letter, put it directly in the light, and read as follows:

You are hideous; I am beautiful. You are a player; I am a duchess. I am of the highest; you, of the lowest; nevertheless I love you! Come!

BOOK IV.

THE CELL OF TORTURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE TEMPTATION OF SAINT GWYNPLAINE.

ONE jet of flame is scarcely visible in the darkness; another sets fire to a volcano. Some sparks are gigantic.

Gwynplaine read the letter, then he read it over again. Yes, the words were there, "I love you." Grim terrors chased each other through his mind. The first was, that he believed himself to be mad. He was mad; that was certain. He had just seen what had no existence. The twilight spectres were making game of him, poor wretch! The youth in scarlet was a will-o'-the-wisp. Sometimes at night, nothings condensed into flame come and laugh at us. Having had his laugh out, the visionary being had disappeared, and left Gwynplaine behind him, mad. Such are the freaks of darkness.

The second terror was, to find out that he was really in his right senses. A vision? Certainly not. How could that be? Had he not a letter in his hand? Did he not see an envelope, a seal, paper, and writing? Did he not know from whom it came? It was all plain enough. Some one took a pen and ink, and wrote. Some one lighted a taper, and sealed it with wax. Was

not his name written on the letter, "*To Gwynplaine*"? The paper was scented. All was clear. Gwynplaine knew the little man. The dwarf was a page. The gleaming scarlet was a livery. The page had given him a rendezvous for the same hour on the morrow, at the corner of London Bridge. Was London Bridge an illusion? No, no; everything was plain. There was no delirium. It was all reality. Gwynplaine was perfectly clear in his mind. It was not a phantasmagoria suddenly dissolving above his head, and fading into nothingness; it was something that had really happened to him.

No, Gwynplaine was not mad, nor was he dreaming. He read the letter again. Well, yes. But then? That *then* was terror-striking. There was a woman who desired him! If so, let no one ever again pronounce the word incredible! A woman desire him! A woman who had seen his face; a woman who was not blind! And who was this woman? An ugly one? No; a beauty. A gypsy? No; a duchess!

What was it all about, and what could it all mean? What peril in such a triumph! And how was he to help plunging headlong into it? What! that woman? That siren, that goddess, that superb lady in the box, that light in the darkness! It was she. Yes; it was she!

His blood seemed to take fire throughout his veins. It was the beautiful unknown,— she who had so troubled his thoughts previously; and his first tumultuous feelings about this woman returned. Forgetfulness is nothing but a palimpsest: an incident happens unexpectedly and all that was effaced revives in the blanks of wondering memory.

Gwynplaine thought that he had dismissed this image from his remembrance, but he found that it was still there; she had put her mark in his brain, and without his

suspecting it the lines had been graven deep by reverie. A certain amount of evil had been done, and this train of thought, thenceforth, perhaps, irreparable, he now resumed eagerly. What! she desired him? What! the princess descend from her throne, the idol from its shrine, the statue from its pedestal, the phantom from its cloud? What! From the depths of the impossible had this chimera come! This deity of the sky! This radiant being! This nereid all glistening with jewels! This proud and unattainable beauty from the height of her radiant throne, was bending down to Gwynplaine! She had checked her chariot of the dawn, drawn by turtle-doves and dragons, before Gwynplaine, and said to him, "Come!" What! this terrible glory of being the object of such abasement from the empyrean, for Gwynplaine! This woman, if he could give that name to a form so starlike and majestic, this woman proposed herself, gave herself, delivered herself up to him! Wonder of wonders! A goddess prostituting herself for him! Superb arms opening in a cloud to clasp him to the bosom of a goddess, and that without degradation! Such majestic creatures cannot be sullied. The gods bathe themselves pure in light; and this goddess who came to him knew what she was doing. She was not ignorant of the incarnate hideousness of Gwynplaine. She had seen the mask that formed his face; and yet that mask had not caused her to draw back. Gwynplaine was loved notwithstanding it! Here was a thing that far surpassed all the marvels of dreams. Gwynplaine was loved in consequence of his mask. Far from repulsing the goddess, his hideousness attracted her. He was not only loved, he was desired. He was more than accepted, he was chosen. He, chosen!

Where this woman dwelt, in a region of matchless splendour, and in a state of perfect freedom, there were

princes in plenty, and she could have taken a prince; nobles, and she could have taken a noble; there were handsome, charming, and magnificent men, and she could have taken an Adonis: but whom had she chosen? Gnafron! She could have the mighty, six-winged seraphim, but she chose the larva crawling in the slime. On one side were royal highnesses and peers, grandeur, opulence, and glory; on the other, a mountebank,—but the mountebank won the day! What kind of scales could there be in the heart of this woman? By what measure did she weigh her love? She took off her ducal coronet and flung it at the feet of a clown! She took from her brow the Olympian aureole and placed it on the bristling head of a gnome! The world was turned topsy-turvy. The insects swarmed on high, the stars were scattered below, while the wonder-stricken Gwynplaine, overwhelmed by a flood of light and lying in the dust, was enshrined in glory. One all-powerful, indifferent to beauty and splendour, gave herself to a creature of night,—preferred Gwynplaine to Antinoüs. Impelled by curiosity, she entered the slums and even descended into them, and from this abdication of goddess-ship resulted this wonderful exaltation of the wretched. "You are hideous. I love you." These words touched Gwynplaine in the ugly spot of pride. Pride is the heel in which all heroes are vulnerable. Gwynplaine was flattered in his vanity as a monster. He was loved for his deformity. He, too, was the exception, as much, and perhaps more, than the Jupiters and the Apollos. He felt superhuman, and so much a monster as to be a god. Fearful bewilderment!

But who was this woman? What did he know about her? Everything and nothing. She was a duchess, that he knew; he knew, too, that she was beautiful and rich; that she had liveries, lackeys, pages, and footmen

running with torches by the side of her coroneted carriage. He knew that she was in love with him, — at least, she said so. Of everything else he was ignorant. He knew her title, but not her name. He knew her wishes, but he knew nothing of her life. Was she married? Was she a widow or a maiden? Was she free? To what family did she belong? Were there snares, traps, dangers about her? Of the immorality existing on the heights of society; the caves on those summits, in which savage charmers dream amid the scattered skeletons of the loves which they have already preyed upon; of the extent of tragic cynicism to which the experiments of a woman may attain who believes herself to be beyond the reach of man, — of such things as these Gwynplaine had no idea. Nor had he even in his mind materials out of which to build up a conjecture, information concerning such things being very scanty in the social depths in which he lived. Still, he detected a shadow; he felt that a mist hung over all this brightness. Did he understand it? No. Could he guess at it? Still less. What was there behind that letter? One pair of folding-doors opening before him as another pair closed behind him, thus causing him a vague anxiety. On the one side an avowal; on the other an enigma, — avowal and enigma, which, like two mouths, one tempting, the other threatening, pronounce the same word, "Dare!"

Never had perfidious chance taken its measures better nor timed more fitly the moment of temptation. Gwynplaine, moved by the influences of springtime, and by the sap rising in all things, was prompt to dream the dream of the flesh. The old Adam, who is not to be stamped out, and over whom none of us can triumph, was awaking in that backward youth, still a boy at twenty-four. It was just at the most stormy moment

of the crisis that this offer was made him, and the naked bosom of the Sphinx appeared before his dazzled eyes. Youth is an inclined plane. Gwynplaine stooped, and something pushed him forward. What? The season and the night. Who? The woman. Were there no month of April, man would be a great deal more virtuous. The budding plants are a set of accomplices! Love is the thief, Spring the receiver.

Gwynplaine was deeply agitated. There is a kind of unpleasant smoke preceding sin, in which the conscience cannot breathe. The nausea of hell steals over virtue in temptation. The yawning abyss emits an exhalation which warns the strong and turns the weak giddy. Gwynplaine was suffering from this mysterious discomfort. Dilemmas, transient and at the same time stubborn, were floating before him. Sin, presenting itself obstinately again and again to his mind, was taking form. The morrow, midnight? London Bridge, the page? Should he go? "Yes," cried the flesh; "No," cried the soul.

Nevertheless, we must remark that, strange as it may appear at first sight, Gwynplaine never once put himself the question, "Should he go?" quite distinctly. Reprehensible actions are like over-strong brandies,—you cannot swallow them at a single draught. You set down your glass; you will finish it presently; there is a strange taste even about that first drop. One thing is certain, he felt something behind him pushing him forward towards the unknown, and he trembled. He could catch a faint glimpse of a crumbling precipice, and he drew back, stricken with terror. He closed his eyes. He tried hard to convince himself that the adventure had never occurred, and to persuade himself into doubting his reason. This was evidently the best plan; the wisest thing he could do was to believe him-

self mad. Fatal fever! Every man, surprised by the unexpected, has at times felt the throb of such tragic pulsations. The observer ever listens with anxiety to the echoes resounding from the dull strokes of the battering-ram of destiny striking against a conscience.

One detail, however, is noteworthy: the effrontery of the adventure, which perhaps might have shocked a depraved man, never struck Gwynplaine. He saw only the grandeur of the woman. Alas! he felt flattered. His vanity assured him of victory only. To dream that he was the object of unchaste desire, rather than of love, would have required much greater wit than innocence possesses. He could not grasp the animal side of the goddess's nature.

A thousand conflicting ideas rushed into Gwynplaine's brain, now following each other singly, now crowding together. Then quiet reigned again, and he would lean his head on his hands, in a kind of mournful attention, like one who contemplates a landscape by night. Suddenly he realized that he was no longer thinking His reverie had reached that point of utter bewilderment in which everything disappears from view. He remembered, too, that he had not entered the inn, and it was probably about two o'clock in the morning. He placed the letter which the page had brought him in his side-pocket, but perceiving that it was next his heart, he drew it out again, crumpled it up, and placed it in a pocket of his hose. He then directed his steps towards the inn, which he entered stealthily, and without awaking little Govicum, who had fallen asleep on the table, with his arms for a pillow, while waiting for him. He closed the door, lighted a candle at the lamp, fastened the bolt, turned the key in the lock, taking, mechanically, all the precautions usual to a man returning home late, ascended the staircase of the Green Box,

slipped into the old hovel which he used as a bedroom, looked at Ursus, who was asleep, blew out his candle, but did not go to bed.

Thus an hour passed away. Weary, at length, and fancying that bed and sleep were synonymous, he laid his head upon the pillow without undressing, making darkness the concession of closing his eyes. But the storm of emotions which assailed him had not ceased for an instant. Sleeplessness is a torture which night inflicts upon man. Gwynplaine suffered greatly. For the first time in his life, he was not satisfied with himself. Secret loathing mingled with gratified vanity. What was he to do. Day broke at last; he heard Ursus get up, but did not raise his eyelids. No truce for him, however. The letter was ever in his mind. Every word of it came back to him. In certain violent mental conflicts, thought becomes a liquid. It is convulsed, it heaves, and something like the dull roaring of the waves rises from it. Flood and flow, sudden shocks and whirls, the hesitation of the wave before the rock; hail and rain; clouds with the light shining through their breaks; the petty flights of useless foam; the wild swell broken in an instant; great efforts lost; wreck appearing all around; darkness and universal dispersion, — these things which are true of the sea, are equally true of man. Gwynplaine was a prey to such a storm.

In the height of his agony, and while his eyes were still closed, he heard an exquisite voice asking, "Are you asleep, Gwynplaine?" He opened his eyes with a start and sat up. Dea was standing in the half-open door. An ineffable smile was in her eyes and on her lips. She stood there, charming in the unconscious serenity of her radiance. Then came, as it were, a sacred moment. Gwynplaine gazed on her, startled, dazzled, awakened. Awakened from what? From

sleep? No, from sleeplessness. It was she, it was Dea; and suddenly he felt in the depths of his being a cessation of the storm and the sublime victory of good over evil. The miracle of the look from on high was accomplished; the blind girl, the sweet light-bearer, with no effort beyond her mere presence, dispelled the darkness within him; the curtain of cloud was dispersed from his soul as by an invisible hand, and a sky of azure, as though by celestial enchantment, again overspread Gwynplaine's conscience. In a moment he became, by the mere presence of that angel, the noble and good Gwynplaine, the innocent man.

CHAPTER II.

FROM GAY TO GRAVE.

HOW simple a miracle is, after all! It was the breakfast hour in the Green Box, and Dea had merely come to see why Gwynplaine had not joined them at table.

"It is you!" exclaimed Gwynplaine; and in that he had said everything. There was no other horizon, no vision for him now but the heaven where Dea was. His agitation was calmed,— calmed in such a manner as he alone can understand who has seen the smile spread swiftly over the ocean when the hurricane has passed away. There is nothing that becomes tranquil more quickly than the waves. This results from their power of absorption. And so it is with the human heart. Not always, however. Dea had but to show herself, and behind the dazzled Gwynplaine there was but a flight of phantoms. What a peace-maker is adoration!

A few minutes afterwards they were sitting opposite each other, Ursus between them, Homo at their feet. The teapot, hung over a little lamp, was on the table. Fibi and Vinos were outside, waiting. They breakfasted as they supped, in the centre compartment. From the position in which the narrow table was placed, Dea's back was turned towards the aperture in the partition which was opposite the entrance door of the Green Box. Their knees were touching. Gwynplaine was pouring out tea for Dea. Suddenly she sneezed. Just at that

moment a thin smoke rose above the flame of the lamp, and something like a piece of paper fell into ashes. It was the smoke which had caused Dea to sneeze.

"What was that?" she asked.

"Nothing," replied Gwynplaine.

And he smiled. He had just burned the duchess's letter. The conscience of the man who loves is the guardian angel of the woman whom he loves. Unburdened of the letter, his relief was wondrous, and Gwynplaine exulted in his integrity as an eagle exults in his wings. It seemed to him as if his temptation had vanished with the smoke, and as if the duchess had crumbled into ashes with the paper.

Taking up their cups at random, and drinking one after the other from the same one, they talked,—a babble of lovers, a chattering of sparrows! Nonsense, worthy of Mother Goose or of Homer! With two loving hearts, seek no further for poetry; with two kisses for dialogue, go no further for music.

"Gwynplaine, I dreamed that we were animals, and had wings."

"Wings; that means birds," murmured Gwynplaine.

"Fools! it means angels," growled Ursus.

And their talk went on.

"If you did not exist, Gwynplaine!—"

"What then?"

"It could only be because there was no God."

"The tea is too hot; you will burn yourself, Dea."

"Blow on my cup."

"How beautiful you are this morning!"

"Do you know that I have a great many things to say to you?"

"Say them."

"I love you!"

"I adore you!"

And Ursus said aside, "By heaven, they are plain-spoken people!"

How blissful to lovers are their moments of silence! In them they gather, as it were, masses of love, which afterwards explode into sweet fragments.

Then came a pause, and afterwards Dea cried, —

"Do you know, in the evening, when we are playing our parts, at the moment when my hand touches your forehead, — oh, what a noble head yours is, Gwynplaine! — at the moment when I feel your hair beneath my fingers, I shiver; a heavenly joy comes over me, and I say to myself, 'In all this world of darkness which encompasses me, in this universe of solitude, in this great obscurity in which I live, in this quaking fear of myself and of everything, I have one prop; and he is here. It is he. It is you."

"Oh, you love me!" said Gwynplaine. "I, too, have no one but you on earth. You are everything to me. Dea, what would you have me do? What do you desire? What do you want?"

Dea answered, "I do not know. I am happy."

"Yes," replied Gwynplaine, "we are happy indeed!"

Ursus raised his voice severely: "So you are happy, are you? That 's a crime. I have warned you before. You are happy! Then take care you are not seen. Take up as little room as you can. Happiness ought to hide itself in a hole. Make yourselves still less than you are, if that be possible. God measures the greatness of happiness by the insignificance of the happy. The happy should conceal themselves like malefactors. Shine out like the wretched glow-worms that you are, and you 'll be trodden on; and serve you right too! What do you mean by all that love-making nonsense? I 'm no duenna, whose business it is to watch lovers billing and cooing. I 'm tired of it all, I tell you; and you may both go to the devil."

And feeling that his harsh tones were melting into tenderness, he drowned his emotion in a loud grumble.

"Father," said Dea, "how roughly you talk."

"That is because I don't like to see people too happy."

Here Homo re-echoed Ursus. His growl was heard from beneath the lovers' feet.

Ursus stooped down, and placed his hand on Homo's head: "That 's right; you 're in bad humour, too. You growl. The bristles are all on end on your pate. You don't like all this love-making. That 's because you are wise. Hold your tongue all the same. You have had your say, and given your opinion; so be it. Now be silent."

The wolf growled again. Ursus looked under the table at him:—

"Be still, Homo! Come, don't dwell on it, you philosopher!"

But the wolf sat up, and looked towards the door, showing his teeth.

"What 's wrong with you now?" said Ursus. And he caught hold of Homo by the skin of the neck.

Heedless of the wolf's growls, and wholly wrapt up in her own thoughts, and in the sound of Gwynplaine's voice, Dea sat silent, absorbed in that kind of ecstasy peculiar to the blind, which seems at times to give them a song to listen to in their hearts, and to make up to them for the vision which they lack by some strain of ideal music. Blindness is a cavern through which celestial harmonies are ever floating.

While Ursus was looking down, talking to Homo, Gwynplaine raised his eyes. He was about to drink a cup of tea. He did not drink it however, but slowly replaced it on the table. His fingers remained open, his eyes fixed. He scarcely breathed.

A man was standing in the doorway, behind Dea.

He was clad in black, with a hood. He wore a wig down to his eyebrows, and held in his hand an iron baton with a crown at each end. This baton was short and massive. Imagine a Medusa thrusting her head between two blossoming branches in paradise.

Ursus, who had heard some one enter, and who had raised his head without loosing his hold of Homo, recognized the terrible personage. He shook from head to foot, and whispered to Gwynplaine: "It 's the wapentake."

Gwynplaine recollected. An exclamation of surprise was about to escape him, but he restrained it. The iron staff, with the crown at each end, was called the iron weapon. It was from this iron weapon, upon which the city officers of justice took the oath when they entered upon their duties, that the old wapentakes of the English police derived their name.

Behind the man in the wig, the frightened landlord could be dimly discerned in the shadow. Without saying a word — a personification of the *muta Themis* of the old charters — the man stretched his right arm over the radiant Dea, and touched Gwynplaine on the shoulder with the iron staff, at the same time pointing with his left thumb to the door of the Green Box behind him. These gestures, all the more imperious for the intruder's silence, meant, Follow me. "*Pro signo excundi, sursum trahe,*" says the old Norman record. He who was touched by the iron weapon had no right but the right of obedience. To that mute order there was no reply. The harsh penalties of the English law threatened the refractory.

Gwynplaine felt a shock under the rigid touch of the law; then he sat as though petrified. If, instead of having been merely grazed on the shoulder, he had been struck a violent blow on the head with the iron staff, he

could not have been worse stunned. He knew that the police officer summoned him to follow; but why? *That* he could not understand.

Ursus, too, was thrown into the most painful agitation, but he saw through matters pretty clearly. His thoughts flew to the jugglers and preachers, — his competitors, — to complaints made against the Green Box, against that delinquent the wolf, to his own affair with the three Bishopsgate commissioners; and who knows, perhaps — but that would be too dreadful — Gwynplaine's unbecoming and factious speeches touching the royal authority. He trembled violently. Dea was smiling.

Neither Gwynplaine nor Ursus uttered a word. They both had the same thought, — not to frighten Dea. It may have struck the wolf as well, for he ceased growling. True, Ursus did not loose him. Homo, however, was a prudent wolf when occasion required. Who is there who has not remarked this kind of intelligence in animals? It may be that to the extent to which a wolf can understand mankind he felt that he was an outlaw.

Gwynplaine rose. Resistance was useless, as he knew, for he remembered Ursus' words. He remained standing in front of the wapentake. The latter raised the iron staff from Gwynplaine's shoulder, and drawing it back, held it out straight in an attitude of command, — a constable's attitude which was well understood in those days by the people, and which expressed the following order: "Let this man, and no other, follow me. The rest remain where they are. Silence!" No curious followers were allowed. In all ages the police have had a taste for arrests of the kind. This description of seizure was termed sequestration of the person.

The wapentake turned round in one motion, like a piece of mechanism revolving on its own pivot, and

with grave and magisterial step proceeded towards the door of the Green Box.

Gwynplaine looked at Ursus. The latter went through a pantomime composed as follows: he shrugged his shoulders, placed both elbows close to his hips, with his hands out, and knitted his brows into chevrons, all intended to signify: "We must submit to the inevitable."

Gwynplaine looked at Dea. She was still in a dream. She was still smiling. He put the tips of his fingers to his lips, and waved her an unutterable kiss.

Ursus, who had partially recovered from his terror now that the wapentake's back was turned, seized this opportunity to whisper in Gwynplaine's ear: "On your life, do not speak until you are questioned."

Gwynplaine, with the same care to avoid noise that he would have taken in a sick room, took his hat and cloak from the hook on the partition, wrapped himself up to the eyes in the cloak, and pulled his hat down over his forehead. Not having been to bed, he had his working clothes still on, and his leather collar round his neck. Once more he looked at Dea. Having reached the door, the wapentake raised his staff and began to descend the steps, Gwynplaine following as if the man was dragging him by an invisible chain. Ursus watched Gwynplaine leave the Green Box. At that moment the wolf gave a low growl, but Ursus quieted him by whispering, "He is coming back."

In the yard, Master Nicless was trying to silence with imperious gestures the cries of terror raised by Vinos and Fibi, as they watched Gwynplaine led away by this formidable-looking official. The two girls were like petrifactions; they had the appearance of stalactites. Govicum, stunned, was gazing open-mouthed out of a window.

The wapentake preceded Gwynplaine by a few steps,

never once turning round or looking at him, with that cold tranquillity which the knowledge that one is the law imparts. In death-like silence they both crossed the yard, passed through the dark tap-room, and reached the street. A few passers-by had collected about the inn door, and the justice of the quorum was there at the head of a squad of police. The idlers, stupefied, and without uttering a word, opened out and stood aside, with true English discipline, at the sight of the constable's staff. The wapentake moved off in the direction of the narrow street then called the Little Strand, skirting the Thames; and Gwynplaine, with the justice of the quorum's men in line on each side of him like a double hedge, wrapped in his cloak as in a shroud, left the inn farther and farther behind him as he followed the silent man, like a statue following a spectre.

CHAPTER III.

LEX, REX, FEX.

UNEXPLAINED arrest, which would greatly astonish an Englishman nowadays, was then a very common proceeding of the police. Recourse was had to it, notwithstanding the Habeas Corpus Act, up to George II.'s time, especially in such delicate cases as were provided for by *lettres de cachet* in France; and one of the accusations against which Walpole had to defend himself was that he had caused, or allowed, Neuhoff to be arrested in that manner. The accusation was probably without foundation, for Neuhoff, King of Corsica, was put in prison by his creditors.

These silent seizures of the person, very usual with the Holy Væhme in Germany, were countenanced by German custom, which regulates one half of the old English laws, and recommended in certain cases by Norman custom, which rules the other half. Justinian's chief of the palace police was called "Silentiarius Imperialis." The English magistrates who practised the seizures in question relied upon numerous Norman texts: "Canes latrant, sergentes silent," and "Sergenter agere, id est tacere." They quoted Landulphus Sagax, paragraph 16: "Facit Imperator silentium." They quoted the charter of King Philip in 1307: "Multos tenebimus bastonerios qui, obmutescentes, sergentare valeant." They quoted the statutes of Henry I. of England, cap. 53: "Surge signo jussus. Taciturnior

esto. Hoc est esse in captione regis." They took advantage especially of the following prescription, held to form part of the ancient feudal franchises of England: "Sous les viscomtes sont les serjans de l'espée, lesquels doivent justicier vertueusement à l'espée tous ceux qui suient malveses compagnies, gens diffamez d'aucuns crimes, et gens fuites et forbannis . . . et les doivent si vigoureusement et discrètement appréhender, que la bonne gent qui sont paisibles soient gardez paisiblement et que les malfeteurs soient espoantés." To be thus arrested was to be seized "à le glaive de l'espée."[1] The jurisconsults referred besides "in Charta Ludovici Hutuni pro Normannis," chapter *Servientes spathæ.* The "Servientes spathæ," in the gradual approach of base Latin to our idioms, became "sergentes spadæ."

These silent arrests were the contrary of the *Clameur de Haro,* and gave warning that it was advisable to hold one's tongue until such time as light should be thrown upon certain matters still shrouded in mystery. They signified questions reserved, and showed in the operation of the police a certain amount of *raison d'état.* The legal term "private" was applied to arrests of this description. It was thus that Edward III., according to some chroniclers, caused Mortimer to be seized in the bed of his mother, Isabella of France. This again, we may venture to doubt, for Mortimer sustained a siege in his town before being captured. Warwick, the king-maker, delighted in practising this mode of "attaching people." Cromwell practised it, especially in Connaught; and it was with this precaution of silence that Trailie Arcklo, a relation of the Earl of Ormond, was arrested at Kilmacaugh.

These seizures of the body by a mere gesture of authority, represented rather a summons to appear than a

[1] Vetus Consuetudo Normanniæ, MS. part i. sect. 1, chap. xi.

warrant of arrest. Sometimes they were but processes of inquiry, and even argued, by the silence imposed upon all, a certain consideration for the person seized. For the mass of the people, little versed as they were in such shades of difference, they had peculiar terrors.

It must not be forgotten that in 1705, and even much later, England was far from being what she is to-day. The general features of its constitution were confused and, at times, very oppressive. Daniel Defoe, who had had a taste of the pillory himself, characterizes the social order of England, somewhere in his writings, as "the iron hands of the law." There was not only the law, but there was its arbitrary administration. We have but to recall Steele, ejected from Parliament; Locke, driven from his professorship; Hobbes and Gibbon, compelled to leave the country; Charles Churchill, Hume, and Priestly, persecuted; John Wilkes sent to the Tower. The task would be a long one, were we to enumerate the victims of the statute against seditious libel. The inquisition had gained quite a foothold throughout Europe, and its police practice was taken as a guide. A monstrous outrage against all rights was possible in England. We have only to recall the "Gazetier Cuirassé." In the middle of the eighteenth century, Louis XV. had writers whose works displeased him arrested in Piccadilly. It is also true that George II. laid hands on the Pretender in France, right in the middle of the hall at the opera. Those were two long arms, — that of the King of France reaching to London; that of the King of England, reaching to Paris! Such was the liberty of the period.

We may add that they were fond of putting people to death privately in prisons, — sleight-of-hand mingled with capital punishment; a hideous expedient, to which England is reverting at the present moment, thus giving

to the world the strange spectacle of a great people, which, in its desire to take the better part, chooses the worse; and which, having before it the past on one side and progress on the other, loses its way, and mistakes night for day.

CHAPTER IV

URSUS PLAYS THE SPY ON THE POLICE.

AS we have already said, according to the very severe laws of those days, a summons to follow the wapentake, addressed to an individual, implied to all other persons present an order not to stir. Some curious idlers, however, were stubborn, and followed from afar off the *cortége* which had taken Gwynplaine into custody.

Ursus was one of the number. He had been petrified with astonishment, as one certainly had reason to be. But Ursus, so often assailed by the surprises incident to a wandering life, and by all sorts of mischances, was prepared for immediate action, like a ship-of-war, and could call to the post of danger the whole crew, — that is to say, the aid of all his faculties. He flung off his stupor, and began to think. He strove not to give way to emotion, but to meet the danger calmly and thoughtfully. To look facts in the face is the duty of every sensible person.

Presently he asked himself: What could he do? Gwynplaine being taken, Ursus was tortured by a twofold fear, — a fear for Gwynplaine, which instigated him to follow his *protégé*, and a fear for himself, which urged him to remain where he was. Ursus had the intrepidity of a fly, and the impassibility of a sensitive plant. His agitation was indescribable. Nevertheless, he heroically decided to brave the law, and to follow the wapentake,

so anxious was he concerning the fate of Gwynplaine. His terror must have been great to prompt so much courage. To what valiant acts will fear drive even a hare! The chamois in despair jumps a precipice. To be terrified into imprudence is one of the forms of fear.

Gwynplaine had been kidnapped rather than arrested. The operation of the police had been executed so rapidly that the denizens of the fair-ground, which was little frequented at that hour of the morning, were scarcely aware of the circumstance. Scarcely any one in the caravans had any idea that the wapentake had come to arrest Gwynplaine. Hence, the smallness of the crowd. Gwynplaine, thanks to his cloak and his hat, which nearly concealed his face, could not be recognized by the passers-by.

Before he went out to follow Gwynplaine, Ursus took a precaution. He spoke to Master Nicless, to the boy Govicum, and to Fibi and Vinos, and insisted that they should keep absolute silence before Dea, who was ignorant of everything; that they should not utter a syllable that could make her suspect what had occurred; that they should make her understand that the cares of the management of the Green Box necessitated the absence of Gwynplaine and Ursus; that, besides, it would soon be the time of her daily siesta, and that before she awoke he and Gwynplaine would have returned; that all that had taken place had arisen from a mistake; that it would be very easy for Gwynplaine and himself to clear themselves before the magistrate and police; that a touch of the finger would put the matter straight, after which they should both return; above all, that no one should say a word on the subject to Dea. Having given these directions, he departed.

Ursus was able to follow Gwynplaine without being noticed. Though he kept at the greatest possible dis-

tance, he so managed as not to lose sight of him. Boldness in ambuscade is the bravery of the timid. After all, notwithstanding the solemnity of the attendant circumstances, Gwynplaine might have been summoned before the magistrate for some unimportant infraction of the law. Ursus assured himself that the question would be decided at once.

The mystery would be solved under his very eyes by the direction taken by the *cortége* when it reached the entrance to the street leading into the Little Strand. If it turned to the left, it would conduct Gwynplaine to the justice hall in Southwark. In that case there would be little to fear. Some trifling municipal offence, an admonition from the magistrate, two or three shillings to pay, and Gwynplaine would be set at liberty, and the performance of "Chaos Vanquished" would take place in the evening as usual. In that case no one would know that anything unusual had happened. If the *cortége* turned to the right, matters would look more serious. There were frightful places in that direction.

When the wapentake, leading the file of guards between whom Gwynplaine walked, reached the small streets, Ursus watched him breathlessly. There are moments in which a man's whole being passes into his eyes. Which way were they going to turn? They turned to the right.

Ursus, staggering with terror, leaned against a wall for support. There is no hypocrisy greater than the words we often say to ourselves, "I wish to know the worst!" At heart we do not wish it at all. We have a dreadful dread of knowing it. Agony is mingled with a dim effort not to see the end. We do not own it to ourselves, but we would draw back if we dared; and when we have advanced, we reproach ourselves for having done so.

Thus did Ursus. He shuddered as he thought: "Things are indeed going wrong. I should have found it out soon enough. What business had I to follow Gwynplaine?" Having made this reflection, man being but self-contradiction, he increased his pace, and hastened to get nearer the *cortége*, so as not to lose sight of Gwynplaine in the labyrinth of small streets.

The *cortége* of police could not move quickly on account of its solemnity. The wapentake led it. The justice of the quorum closed it. This order compelled a certain deliberation of movement. All the majesty possible in an official shone in the justice of the quorum. His costume held a middle place between the splendid robe of a doctor of music of Oxford, and the sober black habiliments of a doctor of divinity of Cambridge. He wore the dress of a gentleman under a long godebert, which is a mantle trimmed with the fur of the Norwegian hare. He was half Goth and half fop in his attire, wearing a wig like Lamoignon, and sleeves like Tristan l'Hermite. His great round eye watched Gwynplaine with the fixity of an owl's. He walked with measured tread. Never did honest man look fiercer.

Ursus, who had lost his way for a moment in the tangled skein of streets, overtook, close to Saint Mary Overy, the *cortége*, which had fortunately been retarded in the churchyard by a fight between children and dogs, —a common incident in the streets in those days. "Dogs and boys," says the old registers of police, placing the dogs before the boys. A man being taken before a magistrate by the police was, after all, an everyday affair, and each one having his own business to attend to, the few followers soon dispersed. There remained but Ursus on the track of Gwynplaine.

They passed two chapels opposite each other, belonging the one to the Recreative Religionists, the other to

the Hallelujah League,—sects which flourished then, and which still exist at the present day. Then the *cortége* wound from street to street, making a zig-zag, choosing by preference lanes not yet built on, roads where the grass grew, and deserted alleys.

At length the *cortége* stopped in a narrow lane with no houses except two or three hovels. This narrow alley was bordered with two walls, the one on the left, low; the other, high. The high wall was black, and built in the Saxon style with narrow holes, scorpions, and large square gratings over narrow loop-holes. There was no window on it, but here and there slits, old embrasures for cross bows and long bows. At the foot of this high wall, like the hole at the bottom of a rat-trap, was a small wicket gate. This small door, encased in a full, heavy girding of stone, had a grated peep-hole, a heavy knocker, a large lock, hinges thick and knotted, a bristling of nails, an armour of plates, and hinges, so that altogether it was more of iron than of wood. There was no one in the lane,—no shops, no pedestrians; but in it there was a continual uproar, as if the lane ran parallel with a torrent. There was a tumult of voices and of carriages. It seemed as if on the other side of the black edifice there must be a great street, doubtless the principal street of Southwark, one end of which ran into the Canterbury road, and the other on to London Bridge.

All the length of the lane, except the *cortége* which surrounded Gwynplaine, a watcher would have seen no human face save that of Ursus peering out from the shadow of the corner of the wall; looking, yet fearing to see. He had posted himself behind the wall at a turn of the lane.

The constables grouped themselves before the wicket. Gwynplaine was in the centre, the wapentake and his

baton of iron being now behind him. The justice of the quorum raised the knocker and struck the door three times. The loop-hole opened. The justice of the quorum said, "By order of her Majesty." The heavy door of oak and iron turned on its hinges, revealing a dark opening, like the mouth of a cave. A grim vault yawned in the shadow. Ursus saw Gwynplaine disappear within it.

CHAPTER V.

A FEARFUL PLACE.

THE wapentake entered behind Gwynplaine; then the justice of the quorum; then the constables. The heavy door swung to, closing hermetically on the stone sills, without any one seeing who had opened or shut it. It seemed as if the bolts re-entered their sockets of their own accord. Some of these mechanisms, the inventions of ancient intimidation, still exist in old prisons,—doors where you saw no door-keeper. With them the entrance to a prison becomes like the entrance to a tomb.

This wicket was the lower door of Southwark Jail. There was nothing in the harsh and worm-eaten aspect of this edifice to soften the air of rigour appropriate to a prison. Originally a pagan temple, built by the Catieuchlans for the Mogons, ancient English gods, it became a palace for Ethelwolfe and a fortress for Edward the Confessor; after which it was elevated to the dignity of a prison, in 1199, by John Lackland. Such was Southwark Jail. This jail, at first intersected by a street,—as Chenonceaux is by a river,—had been for a century or two a gate, that is to say, the gate of a suburb; the passage had then been walled up. There are still several prisons of this kind in England—Newgate, in London; Westgate, in Canterbury; Canongate, in Edinburgh; the Bastille, in France, was originally a gate. Almost all the jails of England present the same appearance,—a high wall without and a hive

of cells within. Nothing could be more funereal than the appearance of these prisons, where spiders and justice spun their webs, and where John Howard, that ray of light, had not yet penetrated. Like the old Gehenna of Brussels, they might well have been designated Treurenberg, — "the house of tears." Before such buildings, at once so savage and inhospitable, men felt the same distress that the ancient navigators suffered before the hell of slaves mentioned by Plautus, — islands of creaking chains, *ferricrepiditæ insulæ*, — when they passed near enough to hear the clank of the fetters.

Southwark Jail, an old place of exorcisms and torture, was originally used solely for the imprisonment of sorcerers, as was proved by two verses engraved on a defaced stone at the foot of the wicket: —

> Sunt arreptitii, vexati dæmone multo
> Est energumenus, quem dæmon possidet unus, —

lines which draw a subtle, delicate distinction between the demoniac and the man possessed of a devil. At the bottom of this inscription, na ed flat against the wall, was a stone ladder, originally of wood, but which had been changed into stone by being buried in earth of petrifying quality at a place ca ed Apsley Gowis, near Woburn Abbey.

The prison of Southwark, now demolished, opened on two streets, between which, as a gate, it formerly served as a means of communication. It had two doors, — in the large street a door used by the authorities; and in the lane the criminals' door, used by the rest of the living and by the dead also, because when a prisoner in the jail died, it was through that doorway his body was carried out, — a liberation not to be despised. Death is release into infinity. It was by this doorway that Gwynplaine had been taken into the prison.

The lane, as we have said, was nothing but a little passage, paved with flints, enclosed between two walls. There is one of the same kind in Brussels called *Rue d'une Personne.* The walls were unequal in height. The high one was the prison; the low one, the cemetery (the enclosure for the mortuary remains of the jail), was not higher than the ordinary stature of a man. In it, almost opposite the prison wicket, was a gate. The dead had only to cross the street; the cemetery was but twenty yards from the jail. Above the high wall loomed a gallows; on the low one was sculptured a Death's head. Neither of these walls made its opposite neighbour more cheerful.

CHAPTER VI.

THE KIND OF MAGISTRACY UNDER THE WIGS OF FORMER DAYS.

A PERSON passing down the main street of Southwark just at that moment would have seen drawn up before the main entrance to the jail, a travelling carriage, recognized as such by its imperial. A few idlers surrounded the carriage. On it was a coat-of-arms, and a personage had been seen to descend from it and enter the prison, — "probably a magistrate," conjectured the crowd. Many of the English magistrates were noble, and almost all had the right of bearing arms. In France blazon and robe were almost contradictory terms. The Duke Saint-Simon says, in speaking of magistrates, "People of that class." In England, a gentleman was not despised for being a judge.

There are travelling magistrates in England; they are called judges of circuit, and this carriage was unquestionably the vehicle of a judge on circuit. Much less comprehensible was the fact that the supposed magistrate got down, not from the carriage itself, but from the box, a place which is not habitually occupied by the owner. Another unusual thing. People travelled at that period in England in two ways, — by coach, at the rate of a shilling for five miles; and by post, paying three half-pence per mile, and twopence to the postilion after each stage. A private carriage, whose owner desired to travel by relays, paid as many shillings per horse per mile as the horseman paid pence.

The carriage drawn up before the jail in Southwark had four horses and two postilions, which displayed princely state. Another thing which excited and disconcerted conjectures to the utmost was the circumstance that the carriage was sedulously closed. The blinds were drawn up. The glasses in front were darkened by blinds; every opening through which the eye might have penetrated was masked. From without, nothing inside could be seen; and most probably from within, nothing outside could be seen. However, it did not seem probable that there was any one in the carriage.

Southwark being in Surrey, the prison was within the jurisdiction of the sheriff of that county. Such distinct jurisdictions were very frequent in England. Thus, for example, the Tower of London was not supposed to be situated in any county; that is to say, legally, it was considered to be in the air. The Tower recognized no authority of jurisdiction except in its own constable, who was qualified as *custos turris*. The Tower had its own special jurisdiction, church, court of justice, and government. The authority of its *custos* or constable extended, outside of London, over twenty-one hamlets. As in Great Britain legal peculiarities are engrafted one upon another, the office of the master gunner of England was derived from the Tower of London. Other legal customs seem still more whimsical. Thus, the English Court of Admiralty consults and applies the laws of Rhodes and of Oleron, a French island which was once English.

The sheriff of a county was a person of high consideration. He was always an esquire, and sometimes a knight. He was called *spectabilis* in the old deeds, "a man to be looked at," a kind of intermediate title between *illustris* and *clarissimus*, — less than the first, more than the second. Long ago the sheriffs of the

counties were chosen by the people; but Edward II., and after him Henry VI., having claimed their nomination for the crown, the office of sheriff became a royal emanation. They all received their commissions from majesty, except the sheriff of Westmoreland, whose office was hereditary, and the sheriffs of London and Middlesex, who were elected by the councilmen in the common hall. Sheriffs of Wales and Chester possessed certain fiscal prerogatives. These appointments are all still in existence in England, but, subjected little by little to the friction of manners and ideas, they have lost much of their former character. It was the duty of the sheriff of the county to escort and protect the judges on circuit. As we have two arms, he had two officers,— his right arm the under-sheriff, his left arm the justice of the quorum. The justice of the quorum, assisted by the bailiff of the hundred, termed the wapentake, apprehended, examined, and, under the responsibility of the sheriff, imprisoned, for trial by the judges of circuit, thieves, murderers, rebels, vagabonds, and all sorts of felons. The shade of difference between the under-sheriff and the justice of the quorum, in their hierarchical service towards the sheriff was, that the under-sheriff accompanied and the justice of the quorum assisted.

The sheriff held two courts,— one fixed and central, the county court, and a movable court, the circuit court. He thus represented both unity and ubiquity. He might as judge be aided and informed on legal questions by the serjeant of the coif, called *sergens eoifæ*, who is a serjeant-at-law, and who wears under his black skull-cap a fillet of white Chambray lawn. The sheriff relieved the jails of their inmates. When he arrived at any town in his circuit, he had a right to try the prisoners, and either released or executed them as the case might be. This was called a jail delivery. The sheriff presented bills

of indictment to the twenty-four members of the grand jury. If they approved, they wrote above, *billa vera;* if the contrary, they wrote *ignoramus.* In the latter case the accusation was annulled, and the sheriff had the privilege of tearing up the bill. If during the deliberation a juror died, this legally acquitted the prisoner and made him innocent, and the sheriff, who had the privilege of arresting the accused, had also that of setting him at liberty.

That which made the sheriff universally feared and respected was the fact that he had charge of executing all the orders of her Majesty, — a fearful latitude. An arbitrary power lodges in such commissions. The officers termed vergers, the coroners making part of the sheriff's *cortége,* and the clerks of the market as escort, with gentlemen on horseback and their servants in livery, made a handsome suite. The sheriff, says Chamberlayne, is the "life of justice, of law, and of the county."

In England an insensible demolition constantly pulverizes and disintegrates laws and customs. You must understand in our day that neither the sheriff, the wapentake, nor the justice of the quorum could exercise their functions as they did then. There was in the England of the past a certain confusion of powers, whose ill-defined attributes resulted in their overstepping their real bounds at times, — a thing which would be impossible at the present day. The usurpation of power by police and justices has ceased. We believe that even the word "wapentake" has changed its meaning. It implied a magisterial function; now it signifies a territorial division: it specified the centurion; it now specifies the cantred (*centum*).

Moreover, in those days the sheriff of the county combined in his authority, which was at once royal and municipal, that of the two magistrates formerly known

in France as the civil lieutenant of Paris and the lieutenant of police. The civil lieutenant of Paris is pretty well described in an old police note: "The civil lieutenant had no objection to domestic quarrels, because he always has the pickings." [1] As to the lieutenant of police, he was a redoubtable person, multiple and vague. The best personification of him was René d'Argenson, who, as Saint-Simon remarked, displayed in his face the three judges of hell united. These three judges of the infernal region, as we have already seen, sat enthroned at Bishopsgate, London.

[1] July 22, 1704

CHAPTER VII.

SHUDDERING.

WHEN Gwynplaine heard the wicket shut, creaking in all its bolts, he trembled. It seemed to him that the door which had just closed was the communication between light and darkness, — opening on one side on the living, human crowd, and on the other on a dead world; and now that everything illumined by the sun was behind him, and he had overstepped the boundary of life, and was standing without it, his heart contracted. What were they going to do with him? What did it all mean? Where was he? He saw nothing around him; he found himself in perfect darkness. The closing of the door had momentarily blinded him. The window in the door had been closed as well. No loophole, no lamp. Such were the precautions of old times. It was forbidden to light the entrance to the jails, so that new-comers could take no observations. Gwynplaine extended his arms, and touched the wall on the right side and on the left. He was in a passage. Little by little a cavernous daylight, exuding, no one knows whence, and which floats about dark places, and to which the dilatation of the pupil slowly adjusts itself, enabled him to distinguish an object here and there, and the corridor became dimly visible before him.

Gwynplaine, who knew naught of penal severities, save through the exaggerations of Ursus, felt as though he had been seized by a sort of gigantic hand. To be caught in the mysterious toils of the law is frightful. He who is brave in all other dangers, is disconcerted in

the presence of justice. Why? Is it because the justice of man works in twilight, and the judge gropes his way? Gwynplaine remembered what Ursus had told him of the necessity for silence. He wished to see Dea again; he felt some discretionary instinct, which urged him not to irritate. Sometimes, to wish to be enlightened is to make matters worse; but on the other hand, the weight of the adventure was so overwhelming that he gave way at length and could not restrain a question.

"Gentlemen," said he, "whither are you taking me?"

They made no answer. It was the law of silent capture, and the Norman text is formal, — *A silentiariis ostio, præpositis introducti sunt.*

This silence froze Gwynplaine. Up to that moment he had believed himself to be firm and self-sufficing. To be self-sufficing is to be powerful. He had lived isolated from the world, and imagined that being alone he was unassailable; and now all at once he felt himself under the pressure of a hideous collective force. How was he to combat that horrible anonyma, the law? He felt faint under the perplexity; a fear of an unknown nature had found a fissure in his armour; besides, he had not slept, he had not eaten, he had scarcely moistened his lips with a cup of tea. The whole night had been passed in a kind of delirium, and the fever was still upon him. He was thirsty, perhaps hungry; and the craving of the stomach disorders everything. Since the previous evening all kinds of incidents had befallen him. The emotions which had tormented had sustained him. Without the storm a sail would be a rag. But his was the excessive feebleness of the rag, which the wind inflates till it tears it. He felt himself sinking. Was he about to fall unconscious on the pavement? To faint is the resource of a woman, and the humiliation of a man. He hardened himself, but he trembled nevertheless.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAMENTATION.

THEY began to move forward through the passage. There was no preliminary registry, no place of record. The prisons in those days were not overburdened with documents. They were content to close round you without knowing why. To be a prison, and to hold prisoners, sufficed.

The procession was obliged to lengthen itself out, by reason of the narrowness of the corridor. They walked almost in single file; first the wapentake, then Gwynplaine, then the justice of the quorum, then the constables, advancing in a group, and completely blocking up the passage behind Gwynplaine. The passage narrowed. Now Gwynplaine touched the walls with both his elbows. In the roof, which was made of flints, dashed with cement, was a succession of projecting granite arches contracting the passage still more. He had to stoop to pass under them. No rapid advance was possible in that corridor. Any one trying to escape through it would have been compelled to move slowly. The passage twisted. All entrails are tortuous, — those of a prison as well as those of a man. Here and there, sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left, spaces in the wall, square and closed by large iron gratings, afforded glimpses of flights of stairs, some descending and some ascending.

They reached a closed door; it opened. They passed through, and it closed again. Then they came to a

second door, which admitted them, then to a third, which also turned on its hinges. These doors seemed to open and shut of themselves. No person was visible. As the corridor contracted, the roof grew lower, until at length it was impossible to stand upright. Moisture exuded from the wall. Drops of water fell from the vaulted roof. The slabs that paved the corridor were covered with slime. The pale, wan light became more and more pall-like. Air was deficient, and what was singularly ominous, the passage seemed to be a descent. Close observation was necessary to perceive that there was such a descent. In darkness even a gentle declivity is portentous. Nothing is more fearful than the vague evils to which we are led by imperceptible degrees. It is awful to descend into unknown depths.

How long they proceeded thus, Gwynplaine could not tell. Moments passed under such crushing agony seem immeasurably prolonged. Suddenly they halted. The darkness was intense. The corridor had widened somewhat. Gwynplaine heard close to him a sound similar to that made by a Chinese gong. It was the wapentake striking his wand against a sheet of iron. The sheet of iron was a door, — not a door on hinges, but a door which could be raised and lowered; something like a portcullis.

There was a sound of creaking in a groove, and Gwynplaine was suddenly face to face with a bit of square light. The sheet of metal had just been raised into a slit in the vault, like the door of a mouse-trap. An opening had appeared. The light was not daylight, but glimmer; but on the dilated eyeballs of Gwynplaine the pale ray struck like a flash of lightning. It was some time before he could distinguish anything. To see with dazzled eyes is as difficult as it is to see in darkness. At length, by degrees, the pupil of his eye adapted it-

self to the light, just as it had adapted itself to the darkness, and he was able to distinguish objects. The light, which had seemed at first too bright, settled into its proper hue and became livid. He cast a glance into the yawning space before him, and what he saw was terrible.

At his feet were about twenty steps, steep, narrow, worn, almost perpendicular, without balustrade on either side, — a sort of stone ridge cut out from the side of a wall into stairs, and leading into a very deep cell, into which one gazed down as into a well. The cell was large, and if it was really the bottom of a well, it must have been a cyclopean one. The idea that the old word "cul-de-basse-fosse" awakens in the mind could only be applied to it if it was supposed to be a den of wild beasts. The cell was neither flagged nor paved. The bottom was of that cold, moist earth, peculiar to deep places. In the midst of the cell, four low and disproportioned columns sustained a deeply arched canopy, the four mouldings of which united in the interior of the canopy, something like the inside of a mitre. This covering, similar to those under which sarcophagi were formerly placed, rose nearly to the top of the vault, and made a sort of central chamber in the cave, if that can be styled a chamber which has only pillars in place of walls. From the centre of the arch hung a brass lamp, round and barred like the window of a prison. This lamp threw around it — on the pillars, on the vault, on the circular wall which was seen dimly behind the pillars — a wan light, cut by bars of shadow. This was the light which had at first dazzled Gwynplaine; now it seemed only a confused redness. There was no other light in the cell, — neither window, nor door, nor loophole.

Between the four pillars, exactly under the lamp, in

In the Torture Chamber.

the spot where there was most light, a pale and terrible form lay extended on the ground. It was lying on its back; a head was visible, the eyes of which were shut; also a body, the chest of which was a shapeless mass. The four limbs belonging to the body were drawn towards the four pillars by four chains fastened to each foot and each hand in the position of the cross of Saint Andrew. These chains were fastened to an iron ring at the base of each column. The form was thus held immovable, in the horrible position of being quartered, and had the icy look of a livid corpse. It was naked. It was a man.

Gwynplaine stood at the top of the stairs as if petrified, looking down. Suddenly he heard a rattle in the throat. The corpse was alive.

Close to the spectre, in one of the arches, on each side of a tall chair placed on a large flat stone, stood two men enveloped in long black cloaks; and in the chair sat an old man, dressed in a red robe, pale, motionless, and austere, holding a bunch of roses in his hand. The bunch of roses would have enlightened any one less ignorant than Gwynplaine. The right of judging with a nosegay in his hand implied the holder to be both a royal and municipal magistrate. The Lord Mayor of London still keeps up the custom. To assist the deliberations of the judges was the function of the earliest roses of the season.

The old man seated in the chair was the sheriff of the county of Surrey. His was the majestic rigidity of a Roman dignitary. The chair was the only seat in the cell. Beside it was a table covered with papers and books, on which lay the long white wand of the sheriff. The men standing by the side of the sheriff were two doctors, one of medicine, the other of law; the latter recognizable by the serjeant's coif over his wig. Both wore black robes, — one of the shape worn by judges,

the other by doctors. Men of these professions wear mourning for the deaths which they cause.

Behind the sheriff, on the edge of the flat stone under the seat, — with a writing-table near him, a bundle of papers on his knees, and a sheet of parchment on the bundle, — crouched a secretary, in a round wig, with a pen in his hand, in the attitude of a man ready to write. This secretary was of the class called keeper of the bag, as was shown by a bag at his feet. These bags, employed in former times in law-suits were termed bags of justice. Leaning against a pillar with folded arms was a man clothed entirely in leather, — the hangman's assistant. These men seemed as if they had been fixed by enchantment in their funereal postures round the chained man. No one of them either spoke or moved. A fearful silence brooded over all.

What Gwynplaine saw was a torture chamber. There were many such in England. The crypt of Beauchamp Tower long served this purpose, as did also a cell in the Lollards' prison. A place of this nature is still to be seen in London, called " the Vaults of Lady Place." In this last-mentioned chamber there is a grate for the purpose of heating the irons. All the prisons of King John's time (and Southwark Jail was one) had their chambers of torture.

The scene which is about to follow was in those days a frequent occurrence in England, and might even be repeated to-day, since the same laws are still unrepealed. England presents the curious spectacle of a barbarous code of laws living on the best of terms with liberty. We confess that they make an excellent family party. Some distrust, however, might not be undesirable. In the case of a crisis, a return to the penal code would not be impossible. English legislation is a tamed tiger with a velvet paw, but the claws are still there. Cut

the claws of the law, and you will do well. Law almost ignores right. On one side is penalty, on the other humanity. Philosophers protest; but it will take some time yet before the justice of man is assimilated to the justice of God.

Respect for the law,— that is the English phrase. In England they venerate the laws so much that they never repeal any; but they save themselves from the consequences of this veneration by never putting these laws into execution. An old law falls into disuse like an old woman, and they never think of killing either one or the other. They cease to make use of them,— that is all. Both are at liberty to consider themselves still young and beautiful. They allow them to suppose that they still exist. This politeness is called respect. Norman custom is very wrinkled, but that does not prevent many an English judge from casting sheep's eyes at her. They stick amorously to an antiquated atrocity, so long as it is Norman. What can be more savage than the gibbet? In 1867 a man was sentenced to be cut into quarters and offered to a woman, — the queen.

Still, torture was never practised in England; history asserts this as a fact. The assurance of history is wonderful. Matthew of Westminster mentions that the "Saxon law, very clement and kind," did not punish criminals by death; and adds that "it limited itself to cutting off the nose and scooping out the eyes." That was all!

Gwynplaine, scared and haggard, stood at the top of the steps, trembling in every limb. He shuddered from head to foot. He tried to think what crime he could have committed. To the silence of the wapentake succeeded the vision of torture to be endured. It was a step forward; but a tragic one. The grim enigma of his seizure was becoming more and more obscure. The

human form lying on the earth rattled in its throat again. Gwynplaine felt some one touch him gently on the shoulder. It was the wapentake. Gwynplaine knew that meant that he was to descend. He obeyed. He descended the stairs step by step. They were very narrow, each eight or nine inches in height. There was no hand-rail. The descent required caution. Two steps behind Gwynplaine followed the wapentake, holding up his iron weapon; and at the same distance behind the wapentake, the justice of the quorum.

As he descended the steps, Gwynplaine felt an indescribable extinction of hope. There was death in every step. With each one that he descended a ray of the light within him died. Growing paler and paler, he reached the bottom of the stairs. The spectre lying chained to the four pillars still rattled in its throat.

A voice in the shadow said, "Approach!"

It was the sheriff addressing Gwynplaine. Gwynplaine took a step forward. "Closer," said the sheriff.

The justice of the quorum murmured in the ear of Gwynplaine so gravely that there was solemnity in the whisper: "You are before the sheriff of the county of Surrey."

Gwynplaine advanced towards the victim extended in the centre of the cell. The wapentake and the justice of the quorum remained where they were, allowing Gwynplaine to advance alone. When he reached the miserable object which he had hitherto seen only from a distance, but which was a living man, his fear increased to terror. The man who was chained there was quite naked, except for that hideously modest rag which might be called the vineleaf of punishment, the *succingulum* of the Romans, and the *christipannus* of the Goths, which the old Gallic jargon converted into *cripagne*. Christ wore only that shred upon the cross.

The terror-stricken sufferer, whom Gwynplaine now saw distinctly, seemed a man about fifty or sixty years of age. He was bald. A few grizzly hairs bristled on his chin. His eyes were closed; his mouth open. Every tooth could be seen. His thin and bony face was like a death's-head. His arms and legs were fastened by chains to the four stone pillars in the shape of the letter X. He had on his breast and belly an iron plate, on which five or six large stones were laid. His rattle was at times a sigh, at times a roar.

The sheriff, still holding his bunch of roses, took from the table with the hand which was free his white wand, and standing up said, "Obedience to her Majesty." Then he replaced the wand upon the table. Then in words long-drawn as a knell, without a gesture, and immovable as the sufferer, the sheriff, raising his voice, said:—

"Man, who liest here bound in chains, listen for the last time to the voice of justice! You have been taken from your dungeon and brought to this jail. Legally summoned in the usual forms, *formaliis verbis pressus;* not regarding lectures and communications which have been made, and which will now be repeated, to you; inspired by a bad and perverse spirit of obstinacy, you have preserved silence, and refused to answer the judge. This is a detestable offence, which constitutes, among deeds punishable by cashlit, the crime and misdemeanour of overseness."

The serjeant of the coif on the right of the sheriff interrupted him, and said, with an indifference which was indescribably lugubrious in its effect: "*Overhernessa.* Laws of Alfred and of Godrun, chapter the sixth."

The sheriff resumed: "The law is respected by all except by scoundrels who infest the woods where the hinds bear young."

Like one clock striking after another, the serjeant said, "Qui faciunt vastum in foresta ubi damæ solent founinare."

"He who refuses to answer the magistrate," said the sheriff, "is suspected of every vice. He is supposed capable of every evil."

The serjeant interposed: "Prodigus, devorator, profusus, salax, ruffianus, ebriosus, luxuriosus, simulator, consumptor patrimonii, elluo, ambro, et gluto."

"Every vice," said the sheriff, "means every crime. He who confesses nothing confesses everything. He who holds his peace before the questions of the judge is in fact a liar and a parricide."

"Mendax et parricida," said the serjeant.

The sheriff said: "Man, it is not permissible to protect one's self by silence. To pretend contumaciousness is a wound given to the law; it is like Diomede wounding a goddess. Taciturnity before a judge is one form of rebellion. Treason to justice is high treason. Nothing is more hateful or rash. He who resists interrogation hides the truth. The law has provided for this. For such cases, the English have always enjoyed the right of the foss, the fork, and chains."

"Anglica Charta, year 1088," said the serjeant. Then with the same mechanical gravity, he added: "Ferrum, et fossam, et furcas cum aliis libertatibus."

The sheriff continued: "Man! Inasmuch as you have not chosen to break silence, though of sound mind and having full knowledge in respect to the subject concerning which justice demands an answer, and inasmuch as you are diabolically refractory, you have necessarily been put to torture; and you have been, by the terms of the criminal statutes, tried by the 'Peine forte et dure.' This is what has been done to you, for the law requires that I should fully inform you. You have

been brought to this dungeon; you have been stripped of your clothes; you have been laid on your back naked on the ground; your limbs have been stretched and tied to the four pillars of the law; a sheet of iron has been placed on your chest, and as many stones as you can bear have been heaped on your belly, 'and more,' says the law."

"Plusque," affirmed the serjeant.

The sheriff continued: "In this situation, and before prolonging the torture, a second summons to answer and to speak has been made to you by me, sheriff of the county of Surrey, and you have satanically kept silent, though under torture, chains, shackles, fetters, and irons."

"Attachiamenta legalia," said the serjeant.

"On your continued refusal and contumacy," said the sheriff, "it being right that the obstinacy of the law should equal the obstinacy of the criminal, the test has been continued according to the edicts and texts. The first day you were given nothing to eat or drink."

"Hoc est superjejunare," said the serjeant.

In the silence, the awful hiss of a man's breathing was distinctly audible from under the heap of stones.

The serjeant-at-law completed his quotation: "Adde augmentum abstinentiæ ciborum diminutione. Consuetudo brittanica, art. 504."

The two men, the sheriff and the serjeant, alternated. Nothing could be more dreary than their imperturbable monotony. The mournful voice responded to the ominous voice; it might be said that the priest and the deacon of punishment were celebrating the high mass of the law.

The sheriff resumed: "On the first day you were given nothing to eat or drink. On the second day you were given food, but nothing to drink. Between

your teeth were thrust three mouthfuls of barley bread. On the third day they gave you drink, but nothing to eat. They poured into your mouth at three different times, and from three different glasses, a pint of water taken from the common sewer of the prison. The fourth day is come. It is to-day. Now, if you do not answer, you will be left here till you die. Justice wills it."

"Mors rei homagium est bonæ legi," promptly reiterated the serjeant.

"And when you feel yourself dying miserably," resumed the sheriff, "no one will attend you, even when the blood rushes from your throat, your chin, and your armpits, and from every pore, from your mouth to your loins."

"A throtabolla," said the serjeant, "et pabus et subhircis et a grugno usque ad crupponum."

The sheriff continued: "Man, listen to me, because the consequences deeply concern you. If you renounce your execrable silence, and confess, you will only be hanged, and you will have a right to the meldefeoh, which is a sum of money."

"Damnum confitens," said the serjeant, "habeat le meldefeoh. Leges Inæ, chapter the twentieth."

"Which sum," insisted the sheriff, "shall be paid in doitkins, suskins, and galihalpens, according to the provisions of Death Statute III. of Henry V., and you will have the right and enjoyment of *scortum ante mortem*, and then be hanged on the gibbet. Such are the advantages of confession. Does it please you to respond to justice?"

The sheriff ceased, and waited. The prisoner lay motionless.

The sheriff resumed: "Man, silence is a refuge in which there is more risk than safety. The obstinate man is damnable and vicious. He who is silent before

the authorities is a felon to the crown. Do not persist in this unfilial disobedience. Think of her Majesty. Do not oppose our gracious queen. When I speak to you, answer her; be a loyal subject."

The victim rattled in the throat.

The sheriff continued: "So, after seventy-two hours of the test, here we are come to the fourth day. Man, this is the decisive day. The fourth day has been fixed by the law for the confrontation."

"Quarta die, frontem ad frontem adduce," growled the serjeant.

"The wisdom of the law," continued the sheriff, "has chosen this last hour to hold what our ancestors called 'judgment in mortal cold,' seeing that it is the moment when men are believed on their *yes* or their *no*."

The serjeant on the right confirmed his words: "Judicium pro frodmortell, quod homines credendi sint per suum ya et per suum no. Charter of King Adelstan, volume the first, page one hundred and sixty-three."

There was a moment's pause; then the sheriff bent his stern face towards the prisoner. "Man, who art lying there on the ground —"

He paused. "Man," he cried, "do you hear me?"

The man did not move.

"In the name of the law," said the sheriff, "open your eyes."

The man's lids remained closed.

The sheriff turned to the doctor, who was standing on his left: "Doctor, make your diagnosis."

"Probe, da diagnosticum," said the serjeant.

The doctor stepped down with magisterial dignity, approached the man, leaned over him, put his ear close to the mouth of the sufferer, felt the pulse at the wrist, the armpit, and the thigh, then rose again.

"Well?" said the sheriff.

"He can still hear," said the doctor.

"Can he see?" inquired the sheriff.

The doctor answered, "He can see."

At a sign from the sheriff, the justice of the quorum and the wapentake advanced. The wapentake placed himself near the head of the patient. The justice of the quorum stood just behind Gwynplaine. The doctor retired a step behind the pillars.

Then the sheriff, raising the bunch of roses like a priest about to sprinkle holy water, called to the prisoner in a loud and solemn voice, —

"O wretched man, speak! The law supplicates before she exterminates you. You, who feign to be mute, remember how mute is the tomb. You, who appear deaf, remember that damnation is more deaf. Think of the death which is far worse than your present state. Repent: you are about to be left alone in this cell. Listen, you who are my likeness; for I too am a man! Listen, my brother, because I am a Christian! Listen, my son, because I am an old man! Look at me; for I am the master of your sufferings, and I am about to become terrible. The terrors of the law constitute the majesty of the judge. Believe that I myself tremble before myself. My own power alarms me. Do not drive me to extremities. I am filled with the holy power of chastisement. Feel, then, wretched man, a salutary and honest fear of justice, and obey me. The hour of confrontation is come, and you must answer. Do not harden yourself in resistance. Do not do that which will be irrevocable. Think that your end depends upon me. Half man, half corpse, listen! At least, let it not be your determination to expire here, exhausted for hours, days, and weeks by frightful agonies of hunger and foulness; under the weight of

those stones; alone in this cell, deserted, forgotten, annihilated; left as food for the rats and weasels, gnawed by creatures of darkness while the world outside comes and goes, buys and sells, and while carriages roll along in the streets above your head,— unless you would continue to draw painful breath without remission in the depths of despair, grinding your teeth, weeping, blaspheming, without a doctor to appease the anguish of your wounds, without a priest to offer a divine draught of water to your soul. Oh, if only that you may not feel the frightful froth of the sepulchre ooze slowly from your lips, I adjure and conjure you to hear me! Have compassion on yourself; do what is asked of you. Submit to the demands of justice. Open your eyes, and see if you recognize this man."

The prisoner neither turned his head nor lifted his eyelids. The sheriff cast a glance first at the justice of the quorum and then at the wapentake. The justice of the quorum, removing Gwynplaine's hat and mantle, put his hands on his shoulders and placed him in the light beside the chained man. The face of Gwynplaine stood out in bold relief from the surrounding shadow. At the same time the wapentake bent down, took the man's temples between his hands, turned the inert head towards Gwynplaine, and with his thumbs and his first fingers lifted the closed eyelids.

The prisoner saw Gwynplaine. Then, raising his head voluntarily, and opening his eyes wide, he looked at him. He quivered as much as a man can quiver with a mountain on his breast, and then cried out,—

"'T is he! Yes, 't is he!" and he burst into a horrible laugh. "'T is he!" he repeated. Then his head fell back on the ground, and he closed his eyes again.

"Registrar, take that down," said the justice.

Gwynplaine, though terrified, had up to that moment

preserved a calm exterior. The cry of the prisoner, "'T is he!" overwhelmed him completely. The words, "Registrar, take that down!" froze him with horror. It seemed to him that a scoundrel had dragged him to his fate without his being able to guess why, and that the man's unintelligible confession was closing round him like the clasp of an iron collar. He fancied himself side by side with him in the posts of the same pillory. Gwynplaine lost his footing in his terror, and protested. He began to stammer incoherent words in the deep distress of an innocent man, and quivering, terrified, uttered the first frantic protests that occurred to him:

"It is not true! It was not me! I do not know this man. He cannot know me, since I do not know him. I have my part to play this evening. What do you want of me? I demand my liberty. Nor is that all. Why have I been brought into this dungeon? Are there no longer any laws in the land? You may as well admit at once that there are no laws. My Lord Judge, I repeat that I am not the man. I am innocent of any crime; I know I am. I want to go away. This is not justice. There is nothing between this man and me. You can find out. My life is no secret They came and arrested me like a thief. Why did they come like that? How could I know the man? I am a travelling mountebank, who plays farces at fairs and markets. I am the Laughing Man. Plenty of people have been to see me. We are staying now in the Tarrinzeau Fields. I have been earning an honest livelihood these fifteen years. I am five-and-twenty. I lodge at the Tadcaster Inn. I am called Gwynplaine. My lord, let me out. You should not take advantage of the low estate of the unfortunate. Have compassion on a man who has done no harm, who is without protection, and without defence. You have before you only a poor mountebank."

"I have before me," said the sheriff, "Lord Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, and a peer of England." And rising, and offering his chair to Gwynplaine, the sheriff added, "My lord, will your lordship deign to seat yourself?"

BOOK V.

THE SEA AND FATE ARE MOVED BY THE SAME BREATH.

CHAPTER I.

THE DURABILITY OF FRAGILE THINGS.

DESTINY sometimes proffers us a glass of madness to drink. A hand is thrust out of the mist, and suddenly hands us the mysterious cup containing latent intoxication.

Gwynplaine did not understand. He looked behind him to see who it was that had been thus addressed. A sound may be too sharp to be perceptible to the ear; an emotion too acute conveys no meaning to the mind. There is a limit to comprehension as well as to hearing.

The wapentake and the justice of the quorum approached Gwynplaine, and took him by the arms. He felt himself placed in the chair which the sheriff had just vacated. He allowed this to be done, without demanding any explanation. When Gwynplaine was seated, the justice of the quorum and the wapentake retired a few steps, and stood upright and motionless, behind his chair. Then the sheriff placed his bunch of roses on the stone table, put on the spectacles which the secretary gave him, drew from the bundles of papers which covered the table a sheet of parchment, yellow.

green, torn, and jagged in many places, which seemed to have been folded in very small folds. One side of the sheet was covered with writing; and standing under the light of the lamp, the sheriff held the paper close to his eyes, and in his most solemn tone read as follows:

"In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

"On this, the twenty-ninth of January, one thousand six hundred and ninetieth year of our Lord, there was wickedly deserted on the desert coast of Portland, with the intention of allowing him to perish of hunger, of cold, and of solitude, a child ten years old. This child was sold at the age of two years, by order of his most gracious Majesty, King James the Second.

"This child was Lord Fermain Clancharlie, the only legitimate son of Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, a Peer of England, and of Ann Bradshaw, his wife, both deceased. This child was the inheritor of the estates and titles of his father. For this reason he was sold, mutilated, disfigured, and put out of the way by desire of his most gracious Majesty.

"That child was brought up, and trained to be a mountebank at markets and fairs. He was sold at the age of two, after the death of the peer, his father, and ten pounds sterling were given to the king as his purchase-money, as well as for divers concessions, tolerations, and immunities, etc.

"Lord Fermain Clancharlie, at the age of two years, was bought by me, the undersigned, who write these lines, and mutilated and disfigured by a Fleming of Flanders, called Hardquanonne, who alone is acquainted with the secrets and modes of treatment of Doctor Conquest. The child was intended by us to be a laughing mask, — *masca ridens*.

"With this intention Hardquanonne performed on him the operation, *Bucca fissa usque ad aures*, which stamps an everlasting laugh upon the face. The child, by means known only to Hardquanonne, was put to sleep and made insensible during its performance, knowing nothing of the operation which he underwent. He does not know that he is Lord

Clancharlie. He answers to the name of Gwynplaine. This fact is the result of his youth, and the slight powers of memory he could have had when he was bought and sold, being then barely two years of age.

"Hardquanonne is the only person who knows how to perform the operation *Bucca fissa*, and the said child is the only living subject upon which it has been attempted. The operation is so unique and singular that though after long years this child will be an old man instead of a child, and his black locks will have turned white, he would be immediately recognized by Hardquanonne.

"At the time of this writing, Hardquanonne, who has perfect knowledge of all the facts, and participated as principal therein, is detained in the prisons of his Highness the Prince of Orange, commonly called King William III. Hardquanonne was apprehended and seized on the charge of being one of a band of Comprachicos or Cheylas. He is imprisoned in the jail at Chatham.

"It was in Switzerland, near the Lake of Geneva, between Lausanne and Vevay, in the very house in which his father and mother died, that this child was, in compliance with the orders of the king, sold and given up by the last servant of the deceased Lord Linnæus, which servant died soon after his master, so this secret is now unknown to any one on earth, excepting Hardquanonne, who is in the dungeon of Chatham, and ourselves, now about to perish.

"We, the undersigned, brought up and kept, for eight years, for professional purposes, the little lord purchased by us of the king. Now, fleeing from England to escape Hardquanonne's fate, our fear of the penal indictments, prohibitions, and fulminations of Parliament induced us to desert, at night-fall, on the coast of Portland, the said child Gwynplaine, who is really Lord Fermain Clancharlie.

"Now, we have sworn secrecy to the king, but not to God. To-night, at sea, overtaken by a violent tempest by the will of Providence, full of despair and distress, kneeling before Him who could save our lives, and may, perhaps, be willing to save our souls, having nothing more to hope from men, but

everything to fear from God, having for our only anchor and resource repentance of our bad actions, resigned to death, and content, if divine justice be satisfied, humble, penitent, and beating our breasts, we make this confession, and confide and deliver it to the furious ocean to use as it may, according to the will of God. And may the Holy Virgin aid us. *Amen.* We herewith append our signatures."

The sheriff here paused in his reading, to remark, "Here are the signatures. All in different handwritings." Then resumed:—

"Doctor Gerhadus Geestemunde. Asuncion. [A cross, and at the side of it] Barbara Fermoy, from Tyrrif Island, in the Hebrides. Gaizdorra, Captal. Giangirate. Jacques Quartourze, alias the Narbonnais. Luc-Pierre Capgaroupe, from the galleys of Mahon."

The sheriff, after a short pause, continued: "Here is a note written in the same hand as the text and the first signature." And he read:—

"Of the three men comprising the crew, the skipper having been swept off by a wave, there remain but two, who sign here. Galdeazun. Ave Maria, thief."

The sheriff, interspersing his reading with his own remarks continued: "At the bottom of the sheet is written,—

"'At sea, on board of the "Matutina," Biscay hooker, from the Gulf de Pasages.'

"This sheet," added the sheriff, "is a legal document, bearing the mark of King James the Second. On the margin of the document and in the same handwriting, there is this note:—

"'The present declaration is written by us on the back of the royal order, which was given us as our receipt when we bought the child. Turn the leaf and the order will be seen.'"

The sheriff turned the parchment, and raised it in his right hand, to expose it to the light. A blank page was seen,— if the word blank can be applied to a thing so mouldy,— and in the middle of the page three words were written, two Latin words, *Jussu regis*, and a signature, *Jefferies*.

"*Jussu regis, Jefferies*," said the sheriff, passing from a grave voice to a clear one.

Gwynplaine felt like a man upon whose head a tile has fallen from the palace of dreams. He began to speak, like one who speaks unconsciously:—

"Gerhadus; yes, that was the doctor, — an old, sad-looking man. I was afraid of him. Gaizdorra, Captal, that means chief. There were women,— Asuncion, and the other. And then the Provençal; his name was Capgaroupe. He used to drink out of a flat bottle on which there was a name woven in red."

"Behold it," said the sheriff. He placed on the table something which the secretary had just taken out of the bag. It was a gourd covered with wicker. This bottle had evidently seen service, and had sojourned long in the water. Shells and sea-weed still adhered to it. It was incrusted and damascened over with the rust of ocean. There was a ring of tar round its neck, showing that it had been hermetically sealed. It was unsealed and open now. They had, however, replaced in the flask a sort of bung made of tarred oakum, which had been used to cork it.

"It was in this bottle," said the sheriff, "that the men about to perish placed the confession which I have just read. This message addressed to justice has been faithfully delivered by the sea."

The sheriff in even more impressive tones continued: "In the same way that Harrow Hill produces excellent wheat, which is converted into fine flour for the royal

table, so the sea renders every service in its power to England; and when a nobleman is lost, finds and restores him."

Then he resumed: "On this flask, as you say, there is a name woven in red."

He raised his voice, turning to the motionless prisoner: "Your name, malefactor, is here. Such are the hidden channels by which truth, swallowed up in the gulf of human actions, floats to the surface."

The sheriff took the gourd, and turned to the light one of its sides, which had, doubtless, been cleaned for purposes of justice. Between the interstices of wicker was a narrow line of red reed, darkened here and there by the action of water and of time. The reed, notwithstanding some breakages, traced distinctly in the wicker-work these twelve letters: *Hardquanonne.* Then the sheriff, resuming that monotonous tone of voice which resembles nothing else, and which may be termed a judicial tone, turned towards the sufferer: —

"Hardquanonne! when this bottle, on which your name is inscribed was for the first time shown, exhibited, and presented to you by us, the sheriff, you at once, and willingly, identified it as your property. Afterwards the parchment which had been folded and enclosed within it, being read to you, you would say no more; and in the hope, doubtless, that the lost child would never be recovered, and that you would escape punishment, you refused to answer all questions. As the result of your refusal, you have had applied to you the *peine forte et dure;* and a second reading of the said parchment, on which the declaration and confession of your accomplices is written, was made to you, but in vain. This is the fourth day, and that legally set apart for the confrontation; and he who was deserted on the twenty-ninth of January, in the year one thousand six

hundred and ninety, having been brought into your presence, your fiendish hope has vanished — you have broken silence, and recognized your victim."

The prisoner opened his eyes, lifted his head, and, with a voice strangely resonant of agony, but which had still an indescribable calmness mingled with its hoarseness, uttered in excruciating accents from beneath the mass of stones, words, to pronounce each of which he had to lift that which was like the slab of a tomb placed upon him. He spoke: —

"I swore to keep the secret. I have kept it as long as I could. Men of dark lives are faithful, and even hell has its honour. Now silence is useless. So be it! For this reason I speak. Well — yes; 't is he! We did it between us, — the king and I! The king, by his will; I, by my art!" and looking at Gwynplaine: "Now laugh forever!" and he himself began to laugh.

A second laugh, wilder yet than the first, might have been taken for a sob. The laugh ceased, and the man lay back. His eyelids closed.

The sheriff, who had allowed the prisoner to speak, resumed: "All of which is placed on record."

He gave the secretary time to write, and then said: "Hardquanonne, by the terms of the law, after confrontation followed by identification, after the third reading of the declarations of your accomplices, since confirmed by your recognition and confession, and after your renewed avowal, you are about to be relieved from these irons, and placed at the good pleasure of her Majesty to be hung as a *plagiary*."

"*Plagiary*," said the serjeant of the coif; "that is to say, a buyer and seller of children. Law of the Visigoths, seventh book, third section, paragraph *Usurpaverit*; and Salic law, section the forty-first, paragraph the second; and law of the Frisons, section the twenty-

first, *De Plagio;* and Alexander Nequam says: " 'Qui pueros vendis, plagiarius est tibi nomen.' "

The sheriff placed the parchment on the table, laid down his spectacles, took up the nosegay, and said: "End of *la peine forte et dure.* Hardquanonne, thank her Majesty."

The justice of the quorum motioned to the man dressed in leather. This man, who was the executioner's assistant ("groom of the gibbet," the old charters call him), went to the prisoner, removed the stones, one by one, from his chest, and lifted the plate of iron up, exposing the wretch's crushed sides. Then he freed his wrists and ankle-bones from the four chains that fastened him to the pillars.

The prisoner, released alike from stones and chains, lay flat on the ground, his eyes closed, his arms and legs apart, like a crucified man taken down from a cross.

"Hardquanonne," said the sheriff, "arise!"

The prisoner did not move.

The groom of the gibbet took up a hand and let it go; the hand fell back. The other hand, being raised, fell back likewise. The groom of the gibbet seized one foot and then the other, and the heels fell back on the ground. The fingers remained inert, and the toes motionless. The naked feet of an extended corpse seem, as it were, to bristle.

The doctor approached, and drawing from the pocket of his robe a small steel mirror, put it to the open mouth of Hardquanonne. Then with his fingers, he lifted the eyelids. They did not close again. The glassy eyeballs remained fixed. The doctor rose up and said, "He is dead;" and he added, "He laughed; that killed him."

"'T is of little consequence," said the sheriff. "After confession, life or death is a mere formality." Then, in-

dicating Hardquanonne by a gesture with the nosegay of roses, the sheriff gave this order to the wapentake: "A corpse to be carried away to-night."

The wapentake acquiesced by a nod.

The sheriff added, "The cemetery of the jail is opposite."

The wapentake nodded again.

The sheriff, holding in his left hand the nosegay and in his right the white wand, placed himself opposite Gwynplaine, who was still seated, and made him a low bow; then assuming another solemn attitude he turned his head over his shoulder, and looking Gwynplaine in the face, said,—

"To you here present, we, Philip Denzill Parsons, knight, sheriff of the county of Surrey, assisted by Aubrey Dominick, Esq., our clerk and registrar, and by our usual officers, duly provided by the direct and special commands of her Majesty, in virtue of our commission, and the rights and duties of our charge, and with authority from the Lord Chancellor of England, the affidavits having been drawn up and recorded, regard being had to the documents communicated by the Admiralty, after verification of attestations and signatures, after declarations read and heard, after confrontation made, all the statements and legal information having been completed, exhausted, and brought to a good and just issue, we signify and declare to you, in order that justice may be done, that you are Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, Marquis de Corleone in Sicily, and a Peer of England; and God keep your lordship."

The sheriff bowed to Gwynplaine. The serjeant on the right, the doctor, the justice of the quorum, the wapentake, the secretary, all the attendants except the executioner, repeated the salutation still more respectfully, and bowed to the ground before Gwynplaine.

"Ah!" said Gwynplaine; "awake me!" and he stood up, pale as death.

"I come to awake you indeed," said a voice which had not been heard before.

A man came out from behind the pillars. As no one had entered the cell since the iron door had admitted the *cortége* of police, it was clear that this man had been there in the shadow before Gwynplaine had entered; that he had an acknowledged right of attendance, and had been present by appointment. The man was fat and pursy, and wore a court wig and a travelling cloak. He was old rather than young, and very precise in his speech. He saluted Gwynplaine with ease and respect, — with the ease of a gentleman-in-waiting, not with the awkwardness of a judge.

"Yes," he said; "I have come to awaken you. For twenty-five years you have slept; you have been dreaming. It is time to wake. You believe yourself to be Gwynplaine; you are Clancharlie. You believe yourself to be one of the people; you belong to the peerage. You believe yourself to be of the lowest rank; you are of the highest. You believe yourself a player; you are a senator. You believe yourself poor; you are wealthy. You believe yourself to be of no account; you are an important personage. Awake, my lord!"

Gwynplaine, in a low voice, in which a tremour of fear was apparent, murmured, "What does it all mean?"

"It means, my lord," said the fat man, "that I am called Barkilphedro; that I am an officer of the Admiralty; that this waif, Hardquanonne's flask, was found on the beach, and was brought to me to be unsealed, according to the duty and prerogatives of my office; that I opened it in the presence of two sworn officials of the Jetsam Office, both members of parliament, — William Blathwait, for the city of Bath, and Thomas Jervois,

for Southampton; that the two jurors deciphered and attested to the contents of the flask, and signed the necessary affidavit conjointly with me; that I made my report to her Majesty, and by order of the queen all necessary and legal formalities were carried out with all the discretion necessary in a matter so delicate; that the last form, the confrontation, has just been carried out; that you have £40,000 a year; that you are a peer of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, a legislator and a judge, — a supreme judge, a sovereign legislator, dressed in purple and ermine, equal to princes, like unto emperors; that you have on your brow the coronet of a peer, and that you are about to wed a duchess, the daughter of a king."

Under this transfiguration, overwhelming him like a series of thunderbolts, Gwynplaine fainted.

CHAPTER II.

THE WAIF KNOWS ITS OWN COURSE.

ALL that had occurred was due to the circumstance of a soldier having found a bottle on the beach. We will relate the facts. In all facts there are wheels within wheels.

One day one of the four gunners composing the garrison of Calshor Castle picked up on the sand at low water a wicker covered flask which had been cast up by the tide. This flask, covered with mould, was corked by a tarred bung. The soldier carried the waif to the colonel of the castle, and the colonel sent it to the High Admiral of England. The Admiral meant the Admiralty; with waifs, the Admiralty meant Barkilphedro. Barkilphedro having uncorked and emptied the bottle, carried it to the queen. The queen immediately took the matter into consideration.

Two weighty counsellors were instructed and consulted; namely the Lord Chancellor, who is by law the guardian of the king's conscience, and the Lord Marshal, who is referee in Heraldry and in the pedigrees of the nobility. Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk, a Catholic peer, who is hereditary Earl Marshal of England, had sent word by his deputy Earl Marshal, Henry Howard, Earl Bindon, that he would agree with the Lord Chancellor. The Lord Chancellor was William Cowper. We must not confound this chancellor with his namesake and contemporary William Cowper, the

anatomist and commentator on Bidloo, who published a treatise on muscles, in England, at the very time that Etienne Abeille published a treatise on bones, in France. A surgeon is a very different thing from a lord. Lord William Cowper is celebrated for having, with reference to the affair of Talbot Yelverton, Viscount Longueville, propounded this opinion: That in the English constitution, the restoration of a peer is more important than the restoration of a king. The flask found at Calshor had excited and interested him greatly.

The author of a maxim delights in opportunities to which it may be applied. Here was a case of the restoration of a peer. Search was made. Gwynplaine was soon found by means of the inscription over his door. Neither was Hardquanonne dead. A prison rots a man, but preserves him,—if to keep is to preserve. People placed in bastiles were rarely removed. Their prisons were changed as rarely as people's graves were changed. Hardquanonne was still in the prison at Chatham. They had only to put their hands on him. He was transferred from Chatham to London. In the mean time, information was sought in Switzerland. The facts were found to be correct. They obtained from the local archives at Vevay and at Lausanne the certificate of Lord Linnæus' marriage in exile, the certificate of his child's birth, the certificate of the decease of the father and mother; and they had duplicates, duly authenticated, made to answer all necessary requirements.

All this was done with the utmost secrecy, as well as with what is called royal promptitude, and that mole-like silence recommended and practised by Bacon, and later on made the law by Blackstone, in affairs connected with the chancellorship and the State, and in matters termed parliamentary. The *jussu regis* and the signature *Jefferies* were authenticated. To those who have studied patho-

logically the cases of caprice called "our good will and pleasure," this *jussu regis* is very simple. Why should James II., whose reputation required the concealment of such acts, have allowed that to be written which so endangered the success of his plans? The answer is, cynicism, haughty indifference. Oh, you fancy that effrontery is confined to abandoned women? The *raison d'état* is equally bold. *Et se cupit ante videri.* To commit a crime and emblazon it is the sum total of history. The king tattooes himself like the convict. Often when it would be to a man's greatest advantage to escape from the hands of the police or the records of history, he would seem to regret the escape, so great is the love of notoriety. Look at my arm. Observe the design. *I* am Lacenaire! See, a temple of love and a burning heart pierced through with an arrow! *Jussu regis.* It is I, James the Second. A man commits a bad action, and places his mark upon it. To fill up the measure of crime by effrontery, to denounce himself, to cling to his misdeeds, is the insolent bravado of the criminal. Christina seized Monaldeschi, had him confessed and assassinated, and said, "I am the Queen of Sweden, in the palace of the King of France."

There is the tyrant who conceals himself, like Tiberius; and the tyrant who parades himself, like Philip II. One has the attributes of the scorpion, the other those of the leopard. James II. belonged to this latter variety. He had, we know, a gay and open countenance, differing so far from Philip. Philip was sullen; James jovial. Both were equally ferocious. James II. was an easy-minded tiger; like Philip II., his crimes lay lightly upon his conscience. He was a monster by the grace of God; therefore he had nothing to dissimulate nor to extenuate, and his assassinations were by divine right. He, too, would not have minded leaving behind him those

archives of Simancas, with all his misdeeds dated, classified, labelled, and put in order, each in its compartment, like poisons in a chemist's laboratory. To set the sign-manual to crimes is right royal.

Every deed done is a draft drawn on the great invisible pay-master. A bill had just come due with the ominous indorsement, *Jussu regis.*

Queen Anne, no woman in one respect, inasmuch as she could keep a secret, demanded a confidential report on so grave a matter from the Lord Chancellor, — one of the kind specified as "report to the royal ear." Reports of this kind have been common in all monarchies. At Vienna there was "a counsellor of the ear," — an aulic dignitary. It was an ancient Carlovingian office, — the *auricularius* of the old palatine deeds; he who whispers to the emperor.

William, Baron Cowper, Chancellor of England, whom the queen believed in because he was as short-sighted as herself, or even more so, had committed to writing a memorandum commencing thus: "Two birds were subject to Solomon, — a lapwing, the Hudbud, who could speak all languages, and an eagle, the Simourganka, who covered with the shadow of his wings a caravan of twenty thousand men. Thus, under another form, Providence," etc. The Lord Chancellor proved the fact that the heir to a peerage had been carried off, mutilated, and then restored. He did not blame James II., who was, after all, the queen's father. He even went so far as to justify him. First, there are ancient monarchial maxims, — *E senioratu cripimus. In roturagio cadat.* Secondly, there is a royal right of mutilation. Chamberlayne asserts this fact. "Corpora et bona nostrorum subjectorum nostra sunt," said James I., of glorious and learned memory. The eyes of dukes of the blood royal have been plucked out for the good of the kingdom.

Certain princes, too near to the throne, have been conveniently stifled between mattresses, the cause of death being given out as apoplexy. Now, to stifle is worse than to mutilate. The King of Tunis tore out the eyes of his father, Muley Assem, and his ambassadors have been no less favourably received by the emperor. Hence the king may order the suppression of a limb like the suppression of a State, etc. It is legal. But one law does not destroy another. "If a drowned man is cast up by the water, and is not dead, it is an act of God readjusting one of the king. If the heir be found, let the coronet be given back to him. This was done for Lord Alla, King of Northumberland, who was also a mountebank. This should be done for Gwynplaine, who was also a king, inasmuch as he was a peer. The lowness of the occupation which he has been obliged to follow, under constraint of superior power, does not tarnish the escutcheon, — witness the case of Abdolmumen, who was a king, although he had been a gardener; that of Joseph, who was a saint, although he had been a carpenter; that of Apollo, who was a god, although he had been a shepherd."

In short, the learned chancellor concluded by advising the re-instatement in all his estates and dignities of Lord Fermain Clancharlie, miscalled Gwynplaine, on the sole condition that he should be confronted with the criminal Hardquanonne, and identified by the same. And on this point the chancellor, as constitutional keeper of the royal conscience, based the royal decision. The Lord Chancellor added in a postscript that if Hardquanonne refused to answer, he should be subjected to the *peine forte et dure*, until the period called the *frodmortell*, according to the statute of King Athelstane, which orders the confrontation to take place on the fourth day. In this there is a certain inconvenience, for if the pris-

oner dies on the second or third day the confrontation becomes difficult; still, the law must be obeyed. The inconvenience of the law makes part and parcel of it. In the mind of the Lord Chancellor, however, the recognition of Gwynplaine by Hardquanonne was indubitable.

Anne, having been made aware of the deformity of Gwynplaine, and not wishing to wrong her sister, on whom the estates of Clancharlie had been bestowed, graciously decided that the Duchess Josiana should be espoused by the new lord, — that is to say, by Gwynplaine. The re-instatement of Lord Fermain Clancharlie was, moreover, a very simple affair, the heir being legitimate, and in the direct line.

In cases of doubtful descent and of peerages in abeyance claimed by collaterals, the House of Lords must be consulted. This (to go no further back) was done in 1782, in the case of the barony of Sydney, claimed by Elizabeth Perry; in 1798, in the case of the barony of Beaumont, claimed by Thomas Stapleton; in 1803 in the case of the barony of Chandos, claimed by the Reverend Tymewell Brydges; in 1813, in the case of the earldom of Banbury, claimed by General Knollys, etc. But the present was not a similar case. Here there was no pretense for litigation; the legitimacy was undoubted; the right clear and certain. There was no point to submit to the House, and the queen, supported by the Lord Chancellor, had power to recognize and admit the new peer.

Barkilphedro managed everything. The affair, thanks to him, was kept so close, the secret was so hermetically sealed, that neither Josiana nor Lord David caught sight of the fearful abyss which was being dug under them. It was easy to deceive Josiana, intrenched as she was behind a rampart of pride. She was self-isolated. As to Lord David, they sent him off to the coast of Flanders.

he was about to lose his peerage, but had no suspicion of it. One circumstance is noteworthy. It happened that about six leagues from the anchorage of the naval station commanded by Lord David, a captain called Halyburton broke through the French fleet. The Earl of Pembroke, President of the Council, proposed that this Captain Halyburton should be made vice-admiral. Anne struck out Halyburton's name, and put Lord David Dirry-Moir's in its place, that he might, when no longer a peer, have the satisfaction of being a vice-admiral.

Anne was well pleased. A hideous husband for her sister, and a fine step for Lord David. Malice and kindness combined. Her Majesty was going to enjoy a comedy. Besides, she argued to herself that she was repairing an abuse of power committed by her august father; she was re-instating a member of the peerage. She was acting like a great queen; she was protecting innocence according to the will of God, and furthering the holy and mysterious ways of Providence, etc. It is very sweet to do a good deed that injures those whom we do not like. To know that the future husband of her sister was deformed, sufficed the queen. In what manner Gwynplaine was deformed, and by what kind of ugliness, Barkilphedro had not communicated to the queen, and Anne had not deigned to inquire. She was proudly and royally disdainful. Besides, what could it matter? The House of Lords could not but be grateful; the Lord Chancellor, its oracle, had approved. To restore a peer is to restore the peerage. Royalty on this occasion had shown itself a good and scrupulous guardian of the privileges of the peerage. Whatever the face of the new lord might be, a face cannot be urged as an objection to a right. Anne said all this to herself, or something like it, and went straight on, her object being at once grand, woman-like, and regal, — namely, to give

herself a pleasure. The queen was then at Windsor, a circumstance which placed a certain distance between the intrigues of the court and the public. Only such persons as were absolutely necessary to the plan were in the secret of what was taking place.

As for Barkilphedro, he was joyful, a circumstance which gave a specially lugubrious expression to his face. If there be one thing in the world which can be more hideous than another, 't is joy. He had had the delight of being the first to taste the contents of Hardquanonne's flask. He seemed but little surprised, for astonishment is the attribute of a little mind. Besides, was it not all due to him, who had waited so long on duty at the gate of chance? Knowing how to wait, he had fairly won his reward. This *nil admirari* was not genuine, however. In his secret heart we must admit that he was very much astonished Any one who could have lifted the mask with which he covered his inmost heart even before God, would have discovered that at that very time Barkilphedro had begun to feel convinced that it would be impossible — even to him, the intimate and most infinitesimal enemy of Josiana — to find a vulnerable place in her armour. Hence an access of savage animosity lurked in his mind. He had reached the paroxysm which is called discouragement. He was all the more furious, because despairing. To gnaw one's chain, — how tragic and appropriate the expression! A villain gnawing at his own powerlessness!

Barkilphedro was perhaps just on the point of renouncing, not his desire to do evil to Josiana, but his hope of doing it; not the rage, but the effort. But how degrading it is to be thus baffled! To keep hate henceforth, in a case, like a dagger in a museum! How bitter the humiliation. All at once — chance, immense and universal, loves to bring such coincidences about — the flask

of Hardquanonne came, driven from wave to wave, into Barkilphedro's hands. There is in the unknown an indescribable fealty which seems to be at the beck and call of evil. Barkilphedro, assisted by two chance witnesses, disinterested officials of the Admiralty, uncorked the flask, found the parchment, unfolded, read it. What words can express his fiendish delight!

It is strange to think that the sea, the wind, space, the ebb and flow of the tide, storms, calms, breezes, should have taken so much trouble to bestow happiness on a scoundrel. That co-operation had continued for fifteen years. Mysterious efforts! For fifteen years the ocean had never for an instant ceased from its labours. The waves transmitted from one to another the floating bottle. The shelving rocks had shunned the brittle glass; no crack had yawned in the flask, no friction had displaced the cork; the sea-weed had not rotted the osier, the shells had not eaten out the word "Hardquanonne;" the water had not penetrated into the waif, the mould had not rotted the parchment, the wet had not effaced the writing. What trouble the mighty deep must have taken! Thus that which Gerhadus had flung into darkness, darkness had brought back to Barkilphedro. The message sent to God had reached the devil. Space had committed a breach of confidence, and the lurking sarcasm which mingles with events had so arranged that it had complicated the triumph of the lost child's becom ing Lord Clancharlie with a venomous victory; in doing a good deed, it had mischievously placed justice at the service of iniquity. To save the victim of James II. was to give a prey to Barkilphedro; to re-instate Gwynplaine was to crush Josiana. Barkilphedro had succeeded; and it was for this that for so many years the waves, the surge, the squalls had buffeted, shaken, thrown, pushed, tormented and respected this bubble

of glass, which bore within it so many commingled fates. It was for this that there had been a cordial co-operation between the winds, the tides, and the tempests: a vast agitation of all elements for the pleasure of a scoundrel; the infinite co-operating with an earthworm! Destiny is subject to such grim caprices.

Barkilphedro was struck by a flash of Titanic pride. He said to himself that it had all been done to fulfil his intentions. He felt that he was the object and the instrument. But he was wrong. Let us clear the character of chance.

Such was not the real meaning of the remarkable circumstance by which the hatred of Barkilphedro was to profit. Ocean had made itself father and mother to an orphan, had sent the hurricane against his executioners, had wrecked the vessel which had repulsed the child, had swallowed up the clasped hands of the storm-beaten sailors, refusing to listen to their supplications and accepting only their repentance. The tempest had received a sacred deposit from the hands of death. The strong vessel containing the crime was replaced by the fragile phial containing the reparation. The sea changed its character, and, like a panther turning nurse, began to rock the cradle, not of the child, but of his destiny, while he grew up ignorant of all that the depths of ocean were doing for him. The waves to which this flask had been flung watching over the past which contained a future; the whirlwind breathing kindly upon it; the currents directing the frail waif across the fathomless wastes of ocean; the caution exercised by seaweed; the swells, the rocks, the vast froth of the abyss, taking under their protection an innocent child; the wave imperturbable as a conscience, chaos re-establishing order, the world-wide shadows ending in radiance, darkness employed to bring the star of truth to light,

the exile consoled in his tomb, the heir given back to his inheritance, the crime of the king repaired, divine premeditation obeyed; the little, the weak, the deserted child with infinity for a guardian, — all this Barkilphedro might have seen in the event over which he exulted. This is what he did not see. He did not believe that all this had been done for Gwynplaine. He fancied that it had been done for Barkilphedro, and that he was well worth the trouble. Thus it is ever with Satan.

Moreover, ere we feel astonished that a waif so fragile should have floated for fifteen years undamaged, we should seek to understand the tender care of the ocean. Fifteen years is nothing. On the 4th of October, 1867, on the coast of Morbihan, between the Isle de Groix, the extremity of the peninsula de Gavres, and the Rocher des Errants, the fishermen of Port Louis found a Roman amphora of the fourth century, covered with arabesques by the incrustations of the sea. That amphora had been floating fifteen hundred years!

Whatever appearance of indifference Barkilphedro tried to exhibit, his wonder had equalled his delight. Everything he could desire was there under his hand. The fragments of the event which was to satisfy his hate were spread out within his reach. He had nothing to do but to pick them up and fit them together, — a work which it was a pleasure to execute. He was the artificer.

Gwynplaine! He knew the name, — *Masca ridens.* Like every one else, he had been to see the Laughing Man. He had read the sign nailed up against the Tadcaster Inn, as one reads a play-bill that attracts a crowd He had noted it. He remembered its most minute details; and, in any case, it was easy to compare them with the original. As if in answer to the electrical summons which resounded in his memory, this notice ranged it-

self side by side with the confession signed by the shipwrecked crew, like an answer following a question, like the solution following an enigma; and the lines, "Here may be seen Gwynplaine, deserted at the age of ten, on the 29th of January, 1690, on the coast at Portland," — suddenly appeared before his eyes in all the splendour of an apocalypse. His vision was the sight of *Mene, Tekel, Upharsin,* outside a booth.

A stately edifice had crumbled into dust. The lost child was found. There was a Lord Clancharlie. David Dirry-Moir was nobody. Peerage, riches, power, rank, — all these things deserted Lord David; all the castles, parks, forests, town houses, palaces, domains, Josiana included, belonged to Gwynplaine now. And what a climax for Josiana! What had she before her? Illustrious and haughty, — a strolling player; beautiful, — a monster. Who could have hoped for this? The truth was, that the joy of Barkilphedro had become enthusiastic. The most hateful combinations are surpassed by the infernal munificence of the unforeseen. When reality chooses, it works masterpieces. Barkilphedro found that all his dreams had been nonsense; the reality was infinitely better.

The change he was about to work would not have seemed less desirable had it been detrimental to him. Insects exist which are so savagely disinterested that they sting, knowing that to sting is to die. Barkilphedro resembled such vermin. But this time he had not the merit of being disinterested. Lord David Dirry-Moir owed him nothing, and Lord Fermain Clancharlie would owe him everything. From being a *protégé,* Barkilphedro was about to become a protector. Protector of whom? Of a Peer of England. He was going to have a lord of his own, and a lord who would be his creature. Barkilphedro counted on giving him his first

impressions. His peer would be the morganatic brother-in-law of the queen. His ugliness would please the queen in the same proportion as it displeased Josiana. Advancing by means of this potent influence and by the assumption of a grave and modest air, Barkilphedro might succeed in becoming quite an important personage. He had always been destined for the church. He had a vague longing to be a bishop.

Meanwhile Barkilphedro was happy. What a great success was his! and what a deal of useful work chance had accomplished for him! His vengeance — for he called it his vengeance — had been softly brought to him by the waves. He had not lain in ambush in vain. He was the rock, Josiana was the waif; Josiana was about to be dashed against Barkilphedro, to his intense villainous ecstasy. He was an adept in the art of suggestion, — that is, in making in the minds of others a little incision into which you put an idea of your own. Holding himself aloof, and without appearing to mix himself up in the matter, it was he who had arranged that Josiana should go to the Green Box and see Gwynplaine. It could do no harm. The appearance of the mountebank, in his low estate, would be a good ingredient in the combination. Later on, it would impart a piquant flavour to it. He had carefully prepared everything beforehand. What he most desired was something unspeakably abrupt. The work in which he was engaged could only be described in these strange words, the construction of a thunderbolt.

All preliminaries being completed, Barkilphedro had watched till all the necessary legal formalities had been accomplished. The secret had not oozed out, silence being an element of law. The confrontation of Hardquanonne with Gwynplaine had taken place. Barkilphedro had been present. We have seen the result.

The same day a post-chaise belonging to the royal household was suddenly sent by her Majesty to fetch Lady Josiana from London to Windsor, where the queen was residing. Josiana, for reasons of her own, would have been very glad to disobey, or at least to defer obedience, and postpone her departure until the next day; but court life does not allow of these objections. She was obliged to set out at once, and to leave Hunkerville House, her residence in London, for Corleone Lodge, her residence at Windsor.

The Duchess Josiana left London at the very moment that the wapentake appeared at the Tadcaster Inn to arrest Gwynplaine, and take him to the torture cell in Southwark. When she arrived at Windsor, the Usher of the Black Rod, who guards the door of the presence chamber, informed her that her Majesty was closeted with the Lord Chancellor and could not receive her until the next day; that she was consequently to remain at Corleone Lodge, at the orders of her Majesty; and that she would receive the queen's commands direct, when her Majesty awoke the next morning. Josiana entered her house feeling very spiteful, supped in a bad humour, had the spleen, dismissed every one except her page, then dismissed him, and went to bed while it was yet daylight. On her arrival she had learned that Lord David Dirry-Moir was expected at Windsor the following day, owing to his having, while at sea, received orders to return immediately and receive her Majesty's commands.

CHAPTER III.

AN AWAKENING.

No man could pass suddenly from Siberia into Senegal without losing consciousness. — HUMBOLDT.

THE swoon of a man, even of an exceedingly firm and energetic man, under the sudden shock of an unexpected piece of good fortune, is nothing remarkable. A man is felled by an unexpected blow, as an ox is felled by a poleaxe. Francis d'Albescola, he who tore the iron chains from the Turkish ports, remained unconscious a whole day when they made him pope. But the stride from a cardinal to a pope is much less than that from a mountebank to a Peer of England. No shock is so violent as a loss of equilibrium.

When Gwynplaine came to himself and opened his eyes, it was night. He was in an arm-chair in the middle of a large chamber lined throughout with purple velvet. The carpet was velvet. Standing near him, with uncovered head, was the fat man in the travelling cloak, who had emerged from behind the pillar in the cell at Southwark. Gwynplaine was alone in the chamber with him. From the chair, by extending his arms, he could reach two tables, each bearing a branch of six lighted wax candles. On one of these tables there were papers and a casket, on the other refreshments, — a cold fowl, wine, and brandy, served on a silver-gilt salver.

Through the panes of a high window, reaching from the ceiling to the floor, a semi-circle of pillars could be seen, in the clear April night, encircling a courtyard with three gates, — one very wide, and the other two low. The carriage gate, of great size, was in the middle; on the right, that for equestrians, much smaller; on the left, that for foot passengers, smaller still. These gates were composed of iron railings, with gilded tops. A large group of statuary surmounted the central gate. The columns were probably of white marble, as well as the pavement of the court, thus producing the effect of snow, and framed in this sheet of smooth flags was a mosaic, the pattern of which was but dimly visible in the shadow. This mosaic, when seen by daylight, would no doubt have disclosed to view, with much emblazonry and in many colours, a gigantic coat-of-arms, in the Florentine fashion. Zig-zags of balustrades rose and fell, indicating lines of terraces. Over the court frowned an immense pile of architecture, now shadowy and vague in the starlight. Intervals of sky, filled with stars, defined the outlines of the palace. An enormous roof could be seen, with vaulted gable ends, dormer windows, roofed over like visors; chimneys like towers; and entablatures covered with sportive gods and goddesses. Beyond the colonnade played in the shadow one of those fairy-like fountains in which, as the water falls from basin to basin, was combined the beauty of rain with that of the cascade; and as if scattering the contents of a jewel-box, it flung to the wind its diamonds and its pearls as though to adorn the statues around. The long rows of windows were separated by panoplies in relievo, and by busts on small pedestals. On the pinnacles, trophies and morions with plumes cut in stone alternated with statues of heathen deities.

In the chamber where Gwynplaine found himself, on the side opposite the window, was a fireplace which reached to the ceiling; and on the other, under a daïs, stood one of those spacious feudal beds which were reached by a ladder, and where you might sleep lying cross-wise. A joint-stool stood beside it; and a row of arm-chairs around the walls, and a row of ordinary chairs in front of them, completed the furniture. The ceiling was domed. A great wood fire blazed in the fireplace; by the richness of the flames, variegated with rose-colour and green, a judge of such things would have known that the wood was ash, — a great luxury. The room was so large that the candelabra failed to light it up. Here and there curtains falling and swaying over doors indicated communication with other rooms. The style of the room was that of the reign of James I., — a style square and massive, antiquated and magnificent. Like the carpet and hangings of the chamber, the daïs, the baldaquin, the bed, the stool, the curtains, the mantelpiece, the coverings of the table, the sofas, the chairs, were all of purple velvet. There was no gilding, except on the ceiling. Laid on it, at equal distance from the four angles, was a huge round shield of embossed metal, on which sparkled, in dazzling relief, various coats-of-arms; among the devices, on two blazons, side by side, were distinguishable the cap of a baron and the coronet of a marquis. Were they of brass, or of silver-gilt? You could not tell. They seemed to be of gold. And in the centre of this lordly ceiling, so like a gloomy and magnificent sky, the escutcheon gleamed with the splendour of a sun shining in the night.

The savage, in whom the free man is embodied, is nearly as restless in a palace as in a prison. This mag-

nificent chamber was depressing. So much splendour produces fear. Who could be the owner of this stately palace? To what colossus did all this grandeur appertain? Of what lion was this the lair?

Gwynplaine, as yet but half awake, was heavy at heart. "Where am I?" he said.

The man who was standing before him, answered, "You are in your own house, my lord."

CHAPTER IV.

FASCINATION.

IT takes time to rise to the surface. Gwynplaine had been thrown into an abyss of stupefaction. We do not gain our footing at once in unknown depths. There are routs of ideas, as there are routs of armies. The rally is not immediate. We feel as it were scattered; as though some strange evaporation of self were taking place. God is the arm. Chance is the sling. Man is the pebble. How are you to resist, once flung?

Gwynplaine, if we may coin the expression, ricochetted from one surprise to another. After the love-letter of the duchess came the revelation in the Southwark dungeon. In destiny, when wonders begin, prepare yourself for blow upon blow. The gloomy portals once open, prodigies pour in. A breach once made in the wall, and events rush in upon us pell-mell. The marvellous never comes singly. The marvellous is shrouded in mystery. The shadow of this mystery was over Gwynplaine. What was happening to him seemed incomprehensible. He saw everything through the haze which a deep commotion leaves in the mind, like the dust caused by a falling ruin. The shock had been all-pervading. Nothing was clear to him. Light always returns by degrees however. The dust settles. Moment by moment the intense astonishment decreases.

Gwynplaine was like a man with his eyes open and fixed in a dream, as if trying to see what may be within

it. He dispersed the mist; then he re-shaped it. He had intervals of wandering. He underwent that oscillation of mind which alternately pushes us towards that which we understand, and then throws us back into that which is incomprehensible. Who has not at some time felt this pendulum in his brain? By degrees his thoughts dilated in this dense mystery, as the pupil of his eye had done in the subterranean shadows at Southwark. The difficulty was to succeed in putting a certain space between accumulated sensations. Before that combustion of hazy ideas called comprehension can take place, air must be admitted between the emotions. There, air was wanting. The event, so to speak, could not be breathed.

In entering that terrible cell at Southwark, Gwynplaine had expected the iron collar of a felon; they had placed on his head the coronet of a peer. How could this be? There had not been time enough between what Gwynplaine had feared and what had really occurred; it had succeeded too quickly, — his terror changed into other feelings too abruptly for comprehension; the contrasts were too tightly packed one against the other. Gwynplaine made an effort to withdraw his mind from the vice. He was silent. This is the instinct of great stupefaction, which is more on the defensive than it is supposed to be. Who says nothing is prepared for everything. A word you chance to drop may be seized in some unknown system of wheels, and your utter destruction be compassed in the intricate machinery. The poor and weak live in continual terror of being crushed. The crowd always expects to be trodden upon. Gwynplaine had long been one of the crowd.

A singular state of human uneasiness is expressed in the words, "Let us see what will happen." Gwynplaine was in this frame of mind. You feel that you

have not gained your equilibrium when an unexpected situation surges up under your feet. You watch for something which must produce a result. You are vaguely attentive. We will see what happens. What? You do not know.

"You are in your own house, my lord," the man repeated.

Gwynplaine felt himself. In surprises, we first look to make sure that things exist; then we feel ourselves to make sure that we exist ourselves. It was certainly to him that the words were addressed; but he himself must be somebody else. He no longer had his jacket on, or his leather esclavine. He had a waistcoat of cloth of silver, and a satin coat, which he touched and found to be embroidered. He felt a heavy purse in his waistcoat pocket. A pair of velvet trunk hose covered his tights. He wore shoes with high red heels. Before they had brought him to this palace, they must have changed his dress.

The man resumed: "Will your lordship deign to remember this: I am called Barkilphedro; I am a clerk in the Admiralty. It was I who opened Hardquanonne's flask and drew your destiny out of it, as in the Arabian Nights, a fisherman releases a giant from a bottle."

Gwynplaine fixed his eyes on the smiling face of the speaker.

Barkilphedro continued: "Besides this palace, my lord, Hunkerville House, which is much larger, is yours. You own Clancharlie Castle, from which you take your title, and which was a fortress in the time of Edward the Elder. You have nineteen bailiwicks belonging to you, with their villages and their inhabitants. This puts under your jurisdiction, as a landlord and a nobleman, about eighty thousand vassals and tenants. At Clancharlie you are a judge, — judge of

all, both of goods and of persons, and you hold your baron's court. The king has no rights which you have not, except the privilege of coining money. The king, designated by the Norman law as chief signor, has justice, court, and coin. Coin is money. So that you, excepting in this last, are as much a king on your estates as he is in his kingdom. You have the right, as a baron, to a gibbet with four pillars in England; and, as a marquis, to a scaffold with seven posts in Sicily, — that of the mere lord having two pillars; that of a lord of the manor, three; and that of a duke, eight. You are styled prince in the ancient charters of Northumberland. You are related to the Viscounts Valentia in Ireland, whose name is Power, and to the Earls of Umfraville in Scotland, whose name is Angus. You are chief of a clan, like Campbell, Ardmannach, and Macallummore. You have eight barons' courts, — Reculver, Baston, Hell-Kerters, Homble, Moricambe, Grundraith, Trenwardraith, and others. You have a right over the turf-cutting of Pillinmore, and over the alabaster quarries near Trent. Moreover, you own all the country of Penneth Chase; and you have a mountain with an ancient town on it. The town is called Vinecaunton; the mountain is called Moil-enlli. All this gives you an income of forty thousand pounds a year, — that is to say, forty times the five-and-twenty thousand francs with which a Frenchman is satisfied."

While Barkilphedro was speaking, Gwynplaine, in an ever increasing state of stupour, reviewed the past. Memory is a gulf that a word can move to its lowest depths. Gwynplaine knew all the words pronounced by Barkilphedro. They were written in the last lines of the two scrolls which lined the van in which his childhood had been passed, and, from so often letting his eyes wander over them mechanically, he knew them by

heart. A forsaken orphan, on reaching the travelling caravan at Weymouth he had found the inventory of the inheritance which awaited him; and in the morning, when the poor little boy awoke, the first object viewed by his careless and unconscious eyes was his own title and its appurtenances. It was a strange detail added to all the other surprises, that, during fifteen years, rolling from highway to highway, the clown of a travelling theatre, earning his bread day by day, picking up farthings, and living on crumbs, he should have travelled with the inventory of his fortune placarded over his misery.

Barkilphedro touched the casket on the table with his forefinger. "My lord, this casket contains two thousand guineas which her gracious Majesty the queen has sent you for your present needs."

Gwynplaine made a movement. "That shall be for my Father Ursus," he said.

"So be it, my lord," said Barkilphedro. "Ursus, at the Tadcaster Inn. The serjeant who accompanied us hither, and who is to return immediately, will carry the money to him. Perhaps I may go to London myself. In that case I will take charge of it."

"I shall take them to him myself," said Gwynplaine.

Barkilphedro's smile disappeared, and he said, "Impossible!"

There is an impressive inflection of voice which, as it were, underlines one's words. Barkilphedro's tone was thus emphatic; he paused, so as to put a full stop after the word he had just uttered. Then he continued, with the peculiar but respectful tone of a servant who feels that he is master:—

"My lord, you are twenty-three miles from London, at Corleone Lodge, your court residence, contiguous to the Royal Castle of Windsor. You are here unknown

to any one. You were brought here in a close carriage, which was awaiting you at the gate of the jail at Southwark. The servants who introduced you into this palace are ignorant who you are; but they know me, and that is sufficient. You may possibly have been brought to these apartments by means of a private key which is in my possession. There are people in the house asleep, and it is not an hour to awaken them; so we have time for an explanation, which will be short, however. I have been commissioned by her Majesty — "

As he spoke, Barkilphedro began to turn over the leaves of some bundles of papers which were lying near the casket. "My lord, here is your patent of peerage. Here is that of your Sicilian marquisate. These are the parchments and title-deeds of your eight baronies, with the seals of eleven kings, from Baldret, King of Kent, to James the Sixth of Scotland, and first of England and Scotland united. Here are your letters of precedence. Here are your rent-rolls and titles, and descriptions of your fiefs, freeholds, dependencies, lands and domains. That which you see above your head in the emblazonment on the ceiling are your two coronets, — the circlet with pearls for the baron, and the circlet with strawberry leaves for the marquis. Here, in the wardrobe, is your peer's robe of red velvet, bordered with ermine. To-day, only a few hours ago, the Lord Chancellor and the Deputy Earl Marshal of England, — informed of the result of your confrontation with the Comprachico Hardquanonne, — have received her Majesty's commands. Her Majesty has signed them, according to her royal will, which is the same as the law. All formalities have been complied with. To-morrow, and no later than to-morrow, you will take your seat in the House of Lords, where they have for some days been deliberating on a bill presented by the Crown, having for its

object the augmentation, by a hundred thousand pounds sterling yearly, of the allowance to the Duke of Cumberland, husband of the queen. You will be able to take part in the debate."

Barkilphedro paused, breathed slowly, and resumed: "However, nothing is yet settled. A man cannot be made a peer of England without his own consent. Everything can be annulled unless you acquiesce. An event nipped in the bud ere it ripens often occurs in state policy. My lord, up to this time silence has been preserved on what has occurred. The House of Lords will not be informed of the facts until to-morrow. Secrecy has been maintained concerning the whole matter for reasons of State, which are of such importance that the influential persons who alone are at this moment cognizant of your existence and of your rights will forget them immediately should reasons of State necessitate their being forgotten. That which is in darkness may remain in darkness. It is easy to blot you out, the more so as you have a brother, the natural son of your father and of a woman who afterwards, during the exile of your father, became a mistress of King Charles II., which accounts for your brother's high position in court; for it is to this brother, bastard though he be, that your peerage would revert. Do you desire this? I cannot think so. Well, all depends on you. The queen must be obeyed. You will not quit this house till to-morrow in a royal carriage, and then to go to the House of Lords. My lord, will you be a peer of England, — yes or no? The queen has designs for you. She destines you for an almost royal alliance. Lord Fermain Clancharlie, this is the decisive moment. Destiny never opens one door without shutting another. After a certain step forward, a step backward is impossible. Whoso

enters into transfiguration leaves evanescence behind him. My lord, Gwynplaine is dead. Do you understand?"

Gwynplaine trembled from head to foot. Then he recovered himself. "Yes," he said.

Barkilphedro smiled, bowed, placed the casket under his cloak, and left the room.

CHAPTER V.

WE THINK WE REMEMBER; WE FORGET.

WHENCE arise those strange, visible changes which occur in the human soul?

Gwynplaine had been at the same moment raised to a lofty eminence and hurled into an abyss. His head swam with double giddiness, — the giddiness of ascent and descent; a fatal combination. He felt himself ascend, and felt not his fall. It is appalling to see a new horizon; a perspective affords suggestions, — but not always good ones. He had before him the fairy glade, — a snare, perhaps, seen through opening clouds, and showing the blue depths of sky, so deep that they are obscure. He was on a mountain, whence he could see all the kingdoms of the earth, — a mountain all the more terrible by reason of being an imaginary one. Those who are on its apex are in a dream. There where Satan tempted Jesus, how could mortal man hope even to struggle? Palaces, castles, power, opulence, every earthly blessing extending as far as eye could reach, — a map of enjoyments stretching to the horizon; a sort of radiant chart of which he was the centre. A perilous mirage!

Imagine what must have been the effect of such a vision, not attained to as by the gradual steps of a ladder but reached without transition and without previous warning. A man going to sleep in a mole's burrow, and awaking on the top of the Strasbourg steeple, — such was

Gwynplaine's condition. Giddiness is dangerous, particularly that giddiness which bears you at once towards the day and towards the night, forming two whirlwinds, one opposed to the other. He saw too much, and not enough. He saw all, and nothing. His state was what the author of this book has somewhere expressed as the blind man dazzled.

Gwynplaine, left to himself, began to walk with long strides. A bubbling precedes an explosion. Despite his agitation, and the impossibility of keeping still, he meditated. His mind liquefied as it boiled. He began to recall things to his memory. It is surprising to find how clearly we understand that to which we scarcely listened. The confession of the shipwrecked men, read by the sheriff in the Southwark cell, came back to him clearly and intelligibly. He recalled every word, he saw under it his whole infancy. Suddenly he stopped, his hands clasped behind his back, looking up to the ceiling, — the sky, no matter what; whatever was above him. "Quits!" he cried. He felt like one whose head rises out of the water. It seemed to him that he saw everything — the past, the future, the present — in the accession of a sudden flash of light.

"Oh!" he cried, for there are cries in the depths of thought. "Oh, it was so, was it? I was a lord. All is discovered. They stole, betrayed, destroyed, abandoned, disinherited, murdered me! The corpse of my destiny floated fifteen years on the sea; all at once it touched the earth, and it started up, erect and living. I am reborn. I felt that the breast palpitating under my rags was not that of a base-born wretch; and when I looked on crowds of men, I felt that they were the flocks, and that I was not the dog, but the shepherd! Shepherds of the people, leaders of men, guides and masters, — such were my fathers; and what they were,

I am! I am a gentleman, and I have a sword; I am a baron, and I have a casque; I am a marquis, and I have a plume; I am a peer, and I have a coronet. Lo! they deprived me of all these. I dwelt in light, they flung me into darkness. Those who proscribed the father, sold the son. When my father was dead, they took from beneath his head the stone of exile which he had placed for his pillow, and tying it to my neck, flung me into a sewer. Oh, those scoundrels who tortured my infancy! Yes, they rise and move about in the recesses of my memory. Yes, I see them again. I was that morsel of flesh pecked to pieces on a tomb by a flock of crows. I bled and cried under the remorseless hands of those horrible creatures. Lo! it was there that they precipitated me, under the tread of those who come and go, under the trampling feet of men, under the lowest of the human race, — lower than the serf, lower than the serving-man, lower than the felon, lower than the slave. At the spot where Chaos becomes a sewer, there I was ingulfed. It is from thence that I come; it is from this that I rise; it is from this that I am risen. And here I am now. Quits!"

Gwynplaine sat down, he rose again, clasped his head between his hands, and began to pace the room again, continuing his excited monologue the while.

"Where am I, — on the summit. Where is it that I have just alighted, — on the highest peak. This pinnacle, this grandeur, this dome of the world, this lofty eminence, this temple in mid-air is my home. I am one of the gods. I dwell on inaccessible heights. This supremacy which I looked up at from below, and from whence emanated such rays of glory that I shut my eyes; this exalted peerage, this impregnable fortress of the fortunate, — I now enter. I am in it; I am of it. Ah, what a decisive turn of fortune's wheel! I was

below, I am now on top, — on top forever! Behold me a lord! I shall have a scarlet robe; I shall have an earl's coronet on my head; I shall assist at the coronation of kings, — they will take the oath from my hands; I shall judge princes and ministers. From the depths into which I was thrown, I have rebounded to the zenith. I have palaces in town and country, — houses, gardens, chases, forests, carriages, millions. I will give *fêtes;* I will make laws. I shall have my pick of joys and pleasures; and the vagabond Gwynplaine, who had no right to gather a flower of the field, may now pluck the stars from heaven!"

Melancholy overshadowing of a soul's brightness! Thus it was that in Gwynplaine, who had been a hero, and who perhaps had not ceased to be one, moral greatness succumbed before material splendour. A lamentable transition! Virtue broken down by a troop of passing demons; an attack made on the weak side of a man's nature; all the paltry desires to which men attach such importance, — ambition, the purblind desires of instinct, passions, covetousness, driven far from Gwynplaine by the wholesome restraints of misfortune, took tumultuous possession of his generous heart. And from what had this arisen? From the discovery of a bit of parchment in a waif drifted by the sea. Conscience may be violated by a chance attack.

Gwynplaine drank in great draughts of pride, which dulled all the noble instincts of his soul. Such is the poisonous effect of that fatal wine. Intoxication invaded him. He more than consented to its approach, — he welcomed it. This was the effect of previous and long-continued thirst. Are we an accomplice of the cup which deprives us of reason? He had always vaguely desired this. His eyes had always turned longingly towards the great. To watch is to wish. The eaglet is not born in

the eyrie for nothing. It seemed to him the simplest thing in the world that he should be a lord. A few hours only had passed, and yet the past of yesterday seemed so far away. Gwynplaine had fallen into the ambuscade of Better, who is the enemy of Good.

Unhappy is he of whom we say, How lucky he is! Adversity is more easily resisted than prosperity. We rise more perfect from ill fortune than from good. There is a Charybdis in poverty and a Scylla in riches. Those who remain erect under the thunderbolt are prostrated by the flash. Thou who standest without shrinking on the verge of a precipice, fear lest thou be carried up on the daring wings of mists and dreams. The ascent which elevates may dwarf thee. An apotheosis has a grim power of degradation. It is not easy to understand what good luck is. Chance is nothing but a disguise. Nothing is so deceptive as the face of fortune. Is she Providence? or is she Fatality? The light which seems to shine so brightly may not be genuine; for light is truth, and this gleam may be a delusion only. You believe that it is lighting you; but no, it is only setting you on fire. At night, a candle made of mean tallow becomes a star if placed in an opening in the darkness. The moth flies to it. To what extent is the moth responsible? The light of the candle fascinates the moth as the eye of the serpent fascinates the bird. Is it possible for the bird and the moth to resist the attraction? Is it possible for the leaf to resist the wind? Is it possible for the stone to refuse obedience to the laws of gravitation? These are material questions, which are moral questions as well.

After he had received the letter of the duchess, Gwynplaine had recovered himself. The deep love in his nature had resisted it. But the storm having wearied itself on one side of the horizon, burst out on the other;

for in destiny, as in Nature, there are successive convulsions. The first shock loosens, the second uproots. Alas! how do oaks fall! Thus he who, as a child of ten, stood alone on the shore of Portland, ready to give battle; who had steadfastly confronted all the dangers he had to encounter, — the blast which bore away the vessel in which he had expected to embark, the gulf which had swallowed up the plank, the precipice which yawned beneath him, the earth which refused him a shelter, the sky which refused him a star to guide him; he who had neither trembled nor fainted before the mighty hostility of the unknown; he who while still so young, had held his own with night, as Hercules of old had held his own with death; he who in the unequal struggle had encumbered himself with a load, while tired and exhausted, thus rendering himself an easier prey to the dangers environing him; he who from his first steps out of the cradle had struggled breast to breast with destiny; he who had struggled on undaunted by his weakness; he who, perceiving in everything around him a frightful occultation of the human race, had accepted that eclipse, and proudly continued his journey; he who had known how to endure cold, thirst, hunger, uncomplainingly; he who, though but a pygmy in stature, had been a colossus in soul, — this Gwynplaine, who had conquered the great enemy of the human race under its twofold form, Tempest and Misery, staggered under a mere breath, — vanity.

Thus, when she has exhausted distress, nakedness, storms, and catastrophies on an unflinching man, Fate begins to smile, and her victim, suddenly intoxicated, succumbs. The smile of Fate, — can anything more terrible be imagined? It is the last resource of the pitiless tempter of souls in his test of man. The tiger, lurking in destiny, caresses man with a velvet paw.

Sinister preparation, hideous gentleness in the monster! Every self-observer has detected within himself mental weakness coincident with aggrandizement. A too rapid growth disturbs the system, and produces fever.

Gwynplaine's brain was bewildered with a host of novel circumstances, — all the lights and shades of a metamorphosis; inexpressibly strange confrontations; the contrast between the past and the future. He beheld two Gwynplaines: behind him, an infant in rags, crawling through the mire, — wandering, shivering, hungry, provoking laughter; before him, a brilliant nobleman, luxurious, proud, — dazzling all London. He was casting off one form, and incorporating himself with the other. He was casting the mountebank, and becoming the peer. Change of skin is sometimes a change of soul. Now and then the past seemed like a dream. It was complex, — bad and good. He thought of his father. It was a poignant anguish never to have known his father. He tried to picture that father to himself. He thought of his brother, of whom he had just heard. So he had relatives, — he, Gwynplaine! He lost himself in fantastic dreams; he saw visions of magnificence; unknown forms of solemn grandeur moved in mist before him; he heard flourishes of trumpets.

"And then," he said, "I shall be eloquent."

He pictured to himself a brilliant entrance into the House of Lords. He would have so many new facts and ideas to impart to them. What could he not tell them? What a store of information he had accumulated! What an advantage to have him in the midst of them, — a man who had seen, touched, undergone, and suffered; who could cry aloud to them, "I have been near to everything from which you are so far removed." He would hurl reality in the face of those patricians, crammed full of illusions. They would tremble, for it

would be the truth that he would tell them. They would applaud, his utterances would be grand and convincing. He would arise among those powerful men more powerful than they. "I shall appear as a torch-bearer, to show them truth; and as a sword-bearer, to show them justice!" What a triumph!

As these fancies were passing through Gwynplaine's mind, he had attacks of delirium,— now sinking on the first seat he came to, now hastily starting up. He walked to and fro, looked up at the ceiling, examined the coronets, studied the hieroglyphics in the emblazonment, felt the velvet on the walls, moved the chairs, turned over the parchments, read the names, spelled out the titles,— Buxton, Homble, Grundraith, Hunkerville, Clancharlie; compared the wax, the impression; felt the twist of silk appended to the royal privy seal; approached the window, listened to the splash of the fountain, contemplated the statues; counted, with the patience of a somnambulist, the marble columns, and said to himself, "It is real."

Then he touched his satin clothes, and asked, "Is this I? Yes."

He was torn by an inward tempest. Was he conscious of faintness and fatigue during this whirlwind of emotion? Did he eat, drink, or sleep? If he did so, he was unconscious of the fact. In certain mental conditions, instinct satisfies itself, according to its requirements, but unconsciously. When the lurid flames of an irruption rise from depths full of boiling lava, has the crater any consciousness of the flocks which crop the grass at the foot of the mountain?

The hours passed. The dawn appeared, and brought the day. A bright ray penetrated the chamber, and at the same instant burst on the soul of Gwynplaine.

"And Dea!" said the light.

BOOK VI.

URSUS UNDER DIFFERENT ASPECTS.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT THE MISANTHROPE SAID.

AFTER Ursus had seen Gwynplaine disappear within the gates of Southwark jail, he lingered, pale with terror, in the corner from which he was watching. For a long time his ears were haunted by the creaking of bolts and bars, which seemed to howl with joy that one wretch more should be confined within them.

Ursus waited. What for? He watched. What for? Such inexorable doors, once shut, do not re-open soon. They are tongue-tied by their stagnation in darkness, and move with difficulty, especially when they have to give up a prisoner. Entrance is permitted; exit is quite a different matter. Ursus knew this. But waiting is a thing which we have not the power to abandon at will. We wait in spite of ourselves. In such cases there is a force, which maintains its action after its object has ceased, which retains possession of us and holds us, and obliges us to continue that which has already lost its motive. Hence the useless watch, the inert position that we have all maintained, the loss of time which every thoughtful man mechanically gives to that which has disappeared. No one can escape this

law. We become stubborn. We know not why we linger in the place, but we do linger. That which we have begun actively, we continue passively, with a grim tenacity from which we emerge overwhelmed. Ursus, though different from other men, was, as any other might have been, nailed to his post by that sort of watchful reverie into which we are plunged by events which are all-important to us, but in which we are impotent. He scrutinized by turns those two black walls, — now the high one, then the low; sometimes the door near which the ladder of the gibbet stood, then that surmounted by a death's head. It was as if he were caught in a vice, composed of a prison and a cemetery. This shunned and unpopular street was so deserted that he was unobserved.

At length Ursus left the archway under which he had taken shelter, — a kind of chance sentry-box, in which he had played the watchman, — and departed with slow steps. The day was declining, for his watch had been long. From time to time he turned his head and looked at the grim doorway through which Gwynplaine had disappeared. His eyes were glassy and dull. He reached the end of the alley, entered another, then another, retracing almost unconsciously the course which he had followed some hours before. At intervals he turned, as if he could still see the door of the prison, though he was no longer in the street in which the jail was located. Step by step he was approaching Tarrinzeau Field. The lanes in the neighbourhood of the fair-ground were deserted pathways between enclosed gardens. He walked along with head bent down, between the hedges and ditches. All at once he halted, and drawing himself up, exclaimed, "So much the better!" At the same time he struck his fist twice on his head and twice on his thigh, thus proving himself to be a sensible fellow

who saw things in their right light. Then he began to growl inwardly, now and then bursting into speech, however.

"It is all right! Oh, the scoundrel! the thief! the vagabond! the worthless fellow! the seditious scamp! It is his speeches about the Government that have sent him there. He is a rebel. I was harbouring a rebel. I am rid of him, and a lucky thing it is for me; he was compromising us. Thrust into prison! So much the better! What excellent laws! Ungrateful boy! I brought him up! Think of having given one's self so much trouble for this! Why should he want to talk and to reason? He must needs mix himself up in politics, the ass! As he handled pennies he babbled about the taxes, about the poor, about the people, about what was no business of his. He allowed himself to make remarks on the coinage. He commented wickedly and maliciously on the copper money of the kingdom. He insulted the farthings of her Majesty. A farthing, — why, 't is the same as the queen. A sacred effigy, — devil take it! A sacred effigy. Have we a queen, yes or no? Then respect her verdigris! Everything depends on the Government: one ought to know that. I have had experience, I have. I know something. They may say to me, 'Why, you must give up politics altogether, then.' Politics, my friends, I care as much for them as for the rough hide of an ass. I received, one day, a blow from a baronet's cane. I said to myself, that is enough; I understand politics. The people have but a farthing, they give it; the queen takes it, the people thank her. Nothing can be more natural. It is for the peers to manage the rest, — their lordships, our lords spiritual and temporal. So Gwynplaine is locked up. So he is in prison! That is as it should be. It is

right, excellent, well-merited, and legitimate. It is his own fault. Criticism is forbidden. Are you a lord, you idiot? The constable has seized him, the justice of the quorum has carried him off, the sheriff has him in custody. At this moment he is probably being examined by a serjeant of the coif. They 'll find out your crimes, those clever fellows! Imprisoned, my wag! So much the worse for him, so much the better for me! I am satisfied. I own frankly that fortune favours me. What folly I was guilty of when I picked up that little boy and girl! We were so quiet before, Homo and I! What business had they in my van, the little blackguards! Did n't I brood over them when they were young? Did n't I drag them many a mile? Pretty foundlings, indeed! he as ugly as sin, and she blind of both eyes! What was the use of depriving myself of everything for their sakes? The beggars grow up, forsooth, and make love to each other. The flirtations of the afflicted. It was to that we had come. The toad and the mole; quite an idyl! A fine state of things in a household. They were sure to end by going before a justice. The toad must needs talk politics. But now I am rid of him. When the wapentake came I acted like a fool; one always doubts one's good luck. I believed that I did not see what I did see; that it was impossible, that it was a nightmare, that some one was playing a trick on me. But, no! nothing could be truer. It is all clear now. Gwynplaine is really in prison. It is a fortunate dispensation of Providence. Praise be to it! He was a monster who by the row he made drew attention to my establishment, and caused my poor wolf to be denounced. Be off, Gwynplaine! And behold, I am rid of both! Two birds killed with one stone; for Dea is sure to die, now that she can no longer see Gwynplaine.

For she dotes on him, the idiot! She will have no object in life. She will say, 'What am I to do in the world?' Good-bye! To the devil with both of them! I always hated the creatures! Die, Dea, if you choose. I shall be glad of it!"

CHAPTER II.

WHAT HE DID.

URSUS returned to the Tadcaster Inn. It was half-past six and nearly dark.

Master Nicless was standing on his doorstep. He had not succeeded in regaining his composure since morning, and terror was still apparent in his face. He perceived Ursus afar off.

"Well!" he cried.

"Well! what?"

"Is Gwynplaine coming back? It is full time. The people will soon be coming in. Shall we have a performance by 'The Laughing Man' this evening?"

"I am the laughing man," said Ursus; and he looked at the tavern-keeper and chuckled loudly.

Then Ursus went up to the first floor, opened the window next to the sign of the inn, leaned over the placard about Gwynplaine, the laughing man, and the bill of "Chaos Vanquished;" unnailed the one, tore down the other, put both under his arm, and came down again.

Master Nicless watched him with wondering eyes. "Why do you take those in?"

Ursus burst into a second fit of laughter.

"Why do you laugh?" said the tavern-keeper.

"I am re-entering private life."

Master Nicless understood, and gave an order to his assistant, the boy Govicum, to announce to any one who might come that there would be no performance

that evening. He took from the door the box made out of a cask, where they received the entrance money, and rolled it into a corner of the lower sitting-room.

A moment after, Ursus entered the Green Box. He put the two signs away in a corner, and entered what he called the woman's wing.

Dea was asleep. She was lying on her bed, dressed as usual, excepting that the body of her gown was loosened, as when she was taking her siesta. Near her Vinos and Fibi were sitting, — one on a stool, the other on the ground, — musing. Notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, they had not dressed themselves in their goddesses' gauze, which was a sign of deep discouragement. They still wore their drugget petticoats, and jackets of coarse cloth.

Ursus looked at Dea. "She is rehearsing for a longer sleep," murmured he. Then addressing Fibi and Vinos: "You both know all. The jig is up. You can put your trumpets away in the drawer. You were wise not to rig yourselves out as goddesses. You look ugly enough, but you were quite right. Keep on your petticoats. There will be no performance to-night, nor to-morrow, nor the day after to-morrow. No Gwynplaine. Gwynplaine is clean gone."

Then Ursus looked at Dea again. "What a blow this will be to her! It will be like blowing out a candle." He inflated his cheeks. "Puff! nothing more."

Then, with a little dry laugh: "Losing Gwynplaine, she loses all. It will be the same as if I were to lose Homo. It will be even worse. She will feel more lonely than any one else could. The blind wade through more sorrow than we do."

Ursus looked out of the window at the end of the room. "How the days lengthen! It is not dark at seven o'clock. Nevertheless, we will light up." He

struck the steel and lighted the lamp which hung from the ceiling of the Green Box. Then he leaned over Dea. "She will catch cold; you have opened her bodice too much. There is a proverb, —

'Though April skies be bright,
Keep all your wrappers tight.'"

Seeing a pin shining on the floor, Ursus picked it up, and stuck it in his sleeve. Then he paced the Green Box, gesticulating all the while: "I am in full possession of my faculties. I am sane, quite sane. I consider this occurrence quite proper, and I approve of what has been done. When she wakes I will explain everything to her. The catastrophe will not be long in coming. No more Gwynplaine: good-night, Dea. How well everything has been arranged! Gwynplaine in prison, Dea in the cemetery: they will be *vis-à-vis!* A dance of death! Two actors going off the stage at once. Pack up the dresses; fasten the valise. For *valise,* read *coffin.* It is the best thing that could have happened to both. Dea without eyes, Gwynplaine without a face. On high the Almighty will restore sight to Dea and beauty to Gwynplaine. Death puts things to rights; all will be well. Fibi, Vinos, hang your tambourines on the nail. Your talents for noise will go to rust, my beauties. No more playing, no more trumpeting. 'Chaos Vanquished' is vanquished indeed. 'The Laughing Man' is done for. 'Taratantara' is dead. Dea sleeps on; she does well. If I were in her place, I would never awake. Oh, she will soon fall asleep again; a skylark like her takes very little killing. This comes of meddling with politics. What a lesson! Governments are always right; so Gwynplaine to the sheriff, and Dea to the grave-digger. Parallel cases! Wonderful similarity! I hope the tavern-keeper has

barred the door. We are going to die to-night quietly at home, by ourselves, — not I or Homo, but Dea. As for me, I shall continue to travel with the van. I belong to the army of vagabonds. I shall dismiss these two women; I shall not even keep one of them. I might, perhaps, become an old *roué;* a maid-servant in the house of a libertine is like a loaf of bread on the shelf. I decline the temptation. It would not be becoming at my age, — *turpe senilis amor.* I will go my way alone with Homo. How astonished Homo will be! Where is Gwynplaine? Where is Dea? Old comrade, here we are once more alone together. Plague take it! I 'm delighted. Their rhapsodies were a bore! Oh, that scamp of a Gwynplaine, who is never coming back! He has left us stuck here. "All right," I say. And now 't is Dea's turn. That won't be long. I like things to be done with. I would not snap my fingers to stop her dying, — dying, I tell you! See, she wakes!"

Dea opened her eyelids; many blind persons shut them when they sleep. Her sweet ingenuous face wore all its usual radiance.

"She smiles," whispered Ursus, "and I laugh. That is as it should be."

Dea called. "Fibi! Vinos! It must be the time for the performance. I think I have been asleep a long time. Come and dress me."

Neither Fibi nor Vinos moved.

As Dea's sightless orbs met those of Ursus, he started. "Well!" he cried; "what are you about? Vinos! Fibi! Do you not hear your mistress? Are you deaf? Quick! the play is about to begin."

The two women looked at Ursus in amazement.

"Do you not hear the audience coming in?" he shouted. Fibi, dress Dea. Vinos, take your tambourine."

Fibi was obedient; Vinos, passive. Together, they

personified submission. Their master, Ursus, had always been to them an enigma. Never to be understood is a reason for being always obeyed. They simply thought he had gone mad, and did as they were told. Fibi took down Dea's costume, and Vinos the tambourine. Fibi began to dress Dea.

Ursus let down the curtain of the women's room, and from behind the curtain continued: "Look here, Gwynplaine! the court is more than half full of people already. What a crowd! And you say that Fibi and Vinos look as if they did not see them. How stupid the gipsies are! Don't lift the curtain from the door; be decent, — Dea is dressing."

Ursus paused, and suddenly they heard an exclamation: "How beautiful Dea is!"

It was the voice of Gwynplaine. Fibi and Vinos started, and turned round. It was the voice of Gwynplaine, but in the mouth of Ursus.

Ursus, by a sign which he made through the half-open door, forbade the expression of any astonishment. Then, again counterfeiting the voice of Gwynplaine: "Angel!" Then he replied in his own voice: "Dea an angel! You are a fool, Gwynplaine. No mammifer except the bat can fly." And he added: "Look here, Gwynplaine! Let Homo loose; that will be more to the purpose."

Whereupon Ursus descended the ladder of the Green Box very quickly, with the agile spring of Gwynplaine, imitating his step so that Dea could hear it. In the court he addressed the boy, whom the occurrences of the day had made idle and inquisitive. "Spread out both your hands," said he, in a loud voice. And he poured a handful of pence into them.

Govicum was grateful for his munificence.

Ursus whispered in his ear: "Boy, go into the yard;

jump, dance, knock, bawl, whistle coo, neigh, applaud, stamp your feet, burst out laughing, break something."

Master Nicless, saddened and humiliated at seeing the folks who had come to see "The Laughing Man" turned away and crowding towards other shows, had shut the door of the inn. He had even given up the idea of selling any beer or spirits that evening, so he would have to answer no awkward questions; and, quite overcome by the sudden close of the performance, he was gazing down, candle in hand, into the courtyard from the balcony above.

Ursus, taking the precaution of putting his voice between parentheses fashioned by adjusting the palms of his hands to his mouth, called out to him: "Do as your boy is doing, sir; yelp, bark, howl." He reascended the steps of the Green Box, and said to the wolf: "*Talk* as much as you can." Then, raising his voice: "What a crowd there is! We shall have a crammed performance."

In the mean time Vinos played the tambourine. Ursus went on: "Dea is dressed; now we can begin. I am sorry they have admitted so many spectators. How thickly packed they are! Look, Gwynplaine, what a mob it is. I'll bet that we take more money today than we have ever done yet. Come, gipsies, play up, both of you. Come here. Fibi, take your clarionet. Good! Vinos, drum on your tambourine; fling it up and catch it again. Fibi, put yourself in the attitude of Fame. Young ladies, you have too much on. Take off those jackets; replace stuff by gauze. The public like to see the female form exposed. Let the moralists thunder. A little indecent — devil take it! What of that? Look voluptuous, and rush into wild melodies. Snort, blow, whistle, flourish, play the tambourine What a crowd of people, my poor Gwynplaine!"

Here Ursus interrupted himself. "Gwynplaine, help me. Let down the platform." He spread out his pocket-handkerchief. "But first let me blow my nose." Having returned his handkerchief to his pocket, he drew the pegs out of the pulleys, which creaked as usual as the platform descended. "Gwynplaine, do not draw the curtain until the performance begins. We are not alone. You two come on in front. Music, ladies! tum, tum, tum. A pretty audience we have! the dregs of the people. Good heavens!"

The two gipsies, stupidly obedient, placed themselves in their usual corners of the platform. Then Ursus became truly wonderful. He was no longer a man, but a crowd of men. Obliged to make abundance out of emptiness, he called to his aid all his prodigious powers of ventriloquism. The whole orchestra of human and animal voices within him were brought into action at once. Any one with his eyes closed would have imagined that he was in a public place on some day of rejoicing, or in some sudden popular riot. A whirlwind of clamour proceeded from Ursus; he sang, he shouted, he talked, he coughed, he spat, he sneezed, took snuff, talked and responded, put questions and gave answers, all at once. The half-uttered syllables ran one into another. In the court, untenanted by a single spectator, men, women, and children could be plainly heard. Strange laughter wound, vapour-like, through the noise, the chirping of birds, the swearing of cats, the wailings of children at the breast. The indistinct tones of drunken men could be heard, and the growls of dogs under the feet of people who stamped on them. The cries came from far and near, from top and bottom, from the upper boxes and the pit. The whole place was in an uproar. Ursus clapped his hands, stamped his feet, threw his voice to the end of the court, and then made it come from under·

ground. He was himself, and any and every one else. Alone, and polyglot. As there are optical illusions, so there are also auricular illusions. That which Proteus did for the sight, Ursus did for the hearing. From time to time he opened the door of the women's apartment and looked at Dea. Dea was listening.

The boy exerted himself to the utmost. Vinos and Fibi trumpeted conscientiously, and took turns with the tambourine. Master Nicless, the only spectator, quietly gave himself the same explanation that they did, — that Ursus had gone mad, which was, for that matter, but another sad item added to his misery. "How very unfortunate!" growled the tavern-keeper. And he was very serious, as a man might well be who had the fear of the law before him.

Govicum, delighted at being able to help in making a noise, exerted himself almost as much as Ursus. It amused him, and, moreover, it earned him pence.

Homo seemed pensive.

In the midst of the tumult Ursus now and then uttered such exclamations as these: —

"There is a cabal against us, as usual, Gwynplaine. Our rivals are trying to impair our success, — to mar our triumph. Besides, there are too many people. They are uncomfortable. The angles of their neighbours' elbows do not increase their good-nature. I hope the benches will not give way. We shall be the victims of an incensed populace. Oh, if our friend Tom-Jim-Jack were only here! but he never comes now. Look at those heads rising one above another. Those who are forced to stand don't look very well pleased, though the great Galen pronounced it to be strengthening. We will shorten the entertainment; as only 'Chaos Vanquished' was announced in the play-bill, we will not play 'Ursus Rursus.' There will be something gained

by that. What an uproar! O blind turbulence of the masses! They will do us some damage. However, they can't go on like this. We should not be able to play. No one could hear a word of the piece. I am going to address them. Gwynplaine, draw the curtain a little aside. — Gentlemen — "

Here Ursus addressed himself with a shrill and feeble voice: —

"Down with that old fool!"

Then he answered in his own voice.

"It seems that the mob wish to insult me. Cicero is right; *plebs, fex urbis.* Never mind, we will admonish the mob, though I shall have a great deal of trouble to make myself heard. I shall speak, notwithstanding. Man, do your duty. Gwynplaine, look at that scold grinding her teeth down there."

There was a pause, in which Ursus gnashed his teeth viciously.

Then he went on: —

"The women are worse than the men. The moment is unpropitious, but it does n't matter! Let us try the effect of a speech; an eloquent speech is never amiss. Listen, Gwynplaine, to my attractive exordium. Ladies and gentlemen, I am a bear. I take off my head to address you. I humbly appeal to you for silence."

Ursus, lending a cry to the crowd, said, —

"Grumphll!"

Then he continued: —

"I respect my audience. Grumphll is as good an epiphonema as any other. You growlers! that you are all of the dregs of the people, I do not doubt. That in no way diminishes my esteem for you, — a well grounded esteem. I have a profound respect for the bullies who honour me with their custom. There are deformed folks among you. They give me no offence.

The lame and the humpbacked are works of Nature. The camel is gibbous. The bison's back is humped. The badger's left legs are shorter than the right. That fact is decided by Aristotle, in his treatise on the gait of animals. There are those among you who have but two shirts,— one on his back and the other at the pawnbroker's. I know that to be true. Albuquerque pawned his moustache, and Saint Denis his aureole. The Jews advanced money upon the aureole. Great examples! To have debts is to possess something. I honour your beggary."

Ursus cut his speech short, interrupting it in a deep bass voice by the shout of:—

"Triple ass!"

He answered in his politest accents.

"I admit it. I am a learned man. I humbly apologize for it. I have all a scientist's contempt for science. Ignorance is a reality on which we feed; science a reality on which we starve. One is generally obliged to choose between two things. To be learned and grow thin, or to browse and be an Ass. Browse, gentlemen! Science is not worth a mouthful of anything nice. I had rather eat a sirloin of beef than know what they call the psoas muscle. I have but one merit, — a dry eye. Such as you see me, I have never wept. It must be owned that I have never been satisfied — never — not even with myself. I despise myself, but I submit this to the members of the opposition here present: though Ursus is only a learned man, Gwynplaine is an artist."

"Grumphll!" he groaned again.

Then resumed:—

"Grumphll again! It is an objection. All the same, I pass it over. With Gwynplaine, gentlemen and ladies, there is another artist, a valued and distinguished person-

age who accompanies us, — his lordship Homo, formerly a wild dog, now a civilized wolf, and a faithful subject of her Majesty's. Homo is a mine of deep and superior talent. Be attentive and watch. You are going to see Homo play as well as Gwynplaine, and you must do honour to art. That is an attribute of great nations. Are you men of the woods? I admit the fact. In that case, *silvæ sint consule dignæ*. Two artists are well worth one consul. All right! Some one has flung a cabbage stalk at me, but did not hit me. That will not stop my speaking; on the contrary, a danger evaded makes folks garrulous, *Garrula pericula*, says Juvenal. My hearers! there are among you drunken men and drunken women. Very well. The men are loathsome, the women hideous. You have all sorts of excellent reasons for stowing yourselves away here on the benches of the pothouse, — want of work, idleness, the spare time between two robberies, porter, ale, stout, malt, brandy, gin, and the attraction of one sex for the other. What could be better? A wit prone to irony would find this a fair field. But I abstain. It is a luxury; so be it; but even an orgy should be kept within bounds. You are gay, but noisy. You imitate the cries of wild beasts very successfully; but what would you say if, when you were making love to a lady, I passed my time in barking at you? It would disturb you, and so it disturbs us. I order you to hold your tongues. Art is as respectable as debauchery. I speak to you civilly."

He apostrophized himself: —

"May the fever strangle you, with your eyebrows like the beard of rye."

And he replied, —

"Honourable gentlemen, let the rye alone. It is impious to insult the vegetables by likening them either to human creatures or animals. Besides, the fever

does not strangle. 'T is a false metaphor. For pity's sake, keep silence. Allow me to tell you that you are sadly wanting in the repose which characterizes the true English gentleman. I see that some among you who have shoes out of which their toes are peeping, take advantage of the circumstance to rest their feet on the shoulders of those who are in front of them, causing the ladies to remark that the soles of shoes always divide at the part near the head of the metatarsal bones. Show more of your hands, and less of your feet. I see scamps plunging their cunning fists into the pockets of their foolish neighbours. Dear pickpockets, have a little modesty. Fight those next to you if you like; do not plunder them. You will vex them less by blackening an eye than by lightening their purses of a penny. Break their noses, if you like. The shop-keeper thinks more of his money than of his beauty. Barring this, accept my sympathy, for I am not pedantic enough to blame thieves. Evil exists. Every on ndures it, every one inflicts it. No one is exempt from the scourge of his sins. That 's what I keep saying. Have we not all our itch? I, myself, have made mistakes. *Plaudite, cives.*"

Ursus uttered a long groan, which he silenced by these concluding words: —

"My lords and gentlemen, I see that my address has unluckily displeased you. I take leave of your hisses for a moment. I shall put on my head, and the performance is about to begin."

He dropped his oratorical tone, and resumed in his usual voice: —

"Drop the curtain. Let me breathe. I have spoken like honey. I have spoken well. My words were like velvet; but they were useless. I called them my lords and gentlemen. What do you think of all this scum, Gwynplaine? How well may we estimate the ills

which England has suffered for the last forty years through the ill-temper of these irritable and malicious spirits. The ancient Britons were warlike, these are melancholy and learned. They glory in despising the laws and contemning royal authority. I have done all that human eloquence can do. I have been prodigal of metonymics, as gracious as the blooming cheek of youth. Were they softened by them? I doubt it. What can affect a people who eat so extraordinarily, who stupefy themselves by tobacco so completely that their literary men often write their works with a pipe in their mouths? Never mind. Let us begin the play."

The rings of the curtain could be heard slipping along the rod. The tambourines of the gipsies were silent. Ursus took down his instrument, executed his prelude, and said in a low tone:—

"Alas! Gwynplaine, how mysterious it is."

Then he flung himself down with the wolf.

When he had taken down his instrument, he had also taken from the nail a rough wig, which he had thrown on the stage in a corner within his reach. The performance of "Chaos Vanquished" took place as usual, minus only the effect of the blue light, and the brilliancy of the fairies. The wolf played his best. At the proper moment Dea made her appearance, and, in her voice so tremulous and heavenly, invoked Gwynplaine. She extended her arms, feeling for that beloved head.

Ursus rushed for the wig, ruffled it, put it on, advanced softly, and holding his breath, placed his bristling head under Dea's hand.

Then calling all his art to his aid, and imitating Gwynplaine's voice, he sang with ineffable love the monster's response to the call of the spirit. The imitation was so perfect that again the gipsies looked around

for Gwynplaine, frightened at hearing without seeing him.

Govicum, filled with astonishment, stamped, applauded, clapped his hands, producing an Olympian tumult, and himself laughed as if he had been a chorus of gods. This boy, it must be confessed, developed a rare talent for personating an audience.

Fibi and Vinos, being automatons of which Ursus pulled the strings, rattled their instruments, the usual sign of the performance being over and of the departure of the people.

Ursus arose, covered with perspiration. He said, in a low voice, to Homo:—

"You see it was necessary to gain time. I think we have succeeded. I have not acquitted myself badly, though I have as much reason to go distracted as any one. Gwynplaine will perhaps return to-morrow. It is useless to kill Dea directly. I can explain matters to you."

He took off his wig and wiped his forehead.

"I am a ventriloquist of genius," murmured he. "What talent I displayed! I have equalled Brabant, the engastrimythist of Francis I., of France. Dea is convinced that Gwynplaine is here."

"Ursus," said Dea, "where is Gwynplaine?"

Ursus started and turned round. Dea was still standing at the back of the stage, alone under the lamp which hung from the ceiling. She was pale as a ghost.

With an ineffable expression of despair, she added:

"I know. He has left us. He is gone. I always knew that he had wings."

And raising her sightless eyes heavenward, she added:

"When shall I follow him?"

CHAPTER III.

COMPLICATIONS.

URSUS was stunned.

He had not sustained the illusion.

Was it the fault of his ventriloquism? Certainly not. He had succeeded in deceiving Fibi and Vinos, who had eyes, although he had not deceived Dea, who was blind. It was because Fibi and Vinos saw with their eyes, while Dea saw with her heart. He could not utter a word. He thought to himself, *Bos in lingua*. The troubled man has an ox on his tongue.

Humiliation was the first of the many emotions which dawned upon him. Ursus, driven out of his last resource, pondered.

"I lavish my onomatopies in vain."

Then, like every dreamer, he reviled himself.

"What a frightful failure! I wore myself out in a pure loss of imitative harmony. What is to be done next?"

He looked at Dea. She was silent, and grew paler every moment, as she stood perfectly motionless. Her sightless eyes remained fixed in depths of thought.

Fortunately, something happened. Ursus saw Master Nicless in the yard, with a candle in his hand, beckoning to him.

Master Nicless had not assisted at the end of the phantom comedy played by Ursus. Some one had happened to knock at the door of the inn. Master

Nicless had gone to open it. There had been two knocks, and twice Master Nicless had disappeared. Ursus, absorbed by his hundred-voiced monologue, had not observed his absence.

On the mute call of Master Nicless, Ursus descended.

He approached the tavern-keeper. Ursus put his finger on his lips. Master Nicless put his finger on his lips.

The two looked at each other thus.

Each seemed to say to the other, "We will talk, but we will hold our tongues."

The tavern-keeper silently opened the door of the lower room of the tavern. Master Nicless entered. Ursus entered. There was no one there except these two. On the side looking on the street, both the doors and window-shutters were closed.

The tavern-keeper pushed the door to behind him in the face of the inquisitive Govicum.

Master Nicless placed the candle on the table.

A whispered dialogue began.

"Master Ursus?"

"Master Nicless?"

"I understand at last."

"Nonsense!"

"You wished that poor blind girl to think that everything was going on as usual."

"There is no law against my being a ventriloquist."

"You are a clever fellow."

"No."

"It is wonderful how you manage all that you wish to do."

"I tell you, it is not."

"Now, I have something to tell you."

"Is it about politics?"

"I don't know."

"Because in that case I could not listen to you."

"Look here; while you were playing actors and audience by yourself, some one knocked at the door of the tavern."

"Some one knocked at the door?"

"Yes."

"I don't like that."

"Nor I, either."

"And then?"

"And then I opened it."

"Who was it that knocked?"

"Some one who spoke to me."

"What did he say?"

"I listened to him."

"What did you answer?"

"Nothing. I came back to see you play."

"And—?"

"Some one knocked a second time."

"Who—the same person?"

"No, another."

"Some one else to speak to you?"

"Some one who said nothing."

"I like that better."

"I do not."

"Explain yourself, Master Nicless."

"Guess who called the first time."

"I have no leisure to be an Œdipus."

"It was the proprietor of the circus."

"Over the way?"

"Over the way."

"Whence comes all that fearful music. Well?"

"Well, Master Ursus, he makes you a proposal."

"A proposal?"

"A proposal."

"Why?"

"Because —"

"You have an advantage over me, Master Nicless; just now you solved my enigma, and now I cannot understand yours."

"The proprietor of the circus commissioned me to tell you that he had seen the *cortége* of police pass this morning, and that he, the proprietor of the circus, wishing to prove that he is your friend, offers to buy of you, for fifty pounds, ready money, your van, the Green Box, your two horses, your trumpets, with the women that blow them, your play, with the blind girl who sings in it, your wolf, and yourself."

Ursus smiled a haughty smile.

"Inn-keeper, tell the proprietor of the circus that Gwynplaine is coming back."

The inn-keeper took something from a chair in the darkness, and turning towards Ursus with both arms raised, dangled from one hand a cloak, and from the other a leather collar, a felt hat, and a jacket.

And Master Nicless said, —

"The man who knocked the second time was connected with the police; he came in and handed me these things, then left without saying a word."

Ursus recognized in the articles, the collar, jacket, hat, and cloak of Gwynplaine.

CHAPTER IV.

MŒNIBUS SURDIS CAMPANA MUTA.

URSUS smoothed the felt hat, touched the cloth of the cloak, the serge of the coat, the leather of the collar, and no longer able to doubt whose garments they were, with a gesture at once hasty and imperative, and without saying a word, pointed to the door of the inn.

Master Nicless opened it.

Ursus rushed out of the tavern.

Master Nicless looked after him, and saw Ursus run as fast as his old legs would carry him, in the direction taken that morning by the wapentake who carried off Gwynplaine.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, Ursus, out of breath, reached the little street back of the Southwark jail, where he had already watched so many hours. This alley was lonely enough at all hours; but if dreary during the day, it was portentous at night. No one ventured through it after a certain hour. It seemed as though people feared that the walls would close in, and that if the prison or the cemetery took a fancy to embrace, any chance pedestrian would be crushed in their clasp. Such are the effects of darkness. The pollard willows of the ruelle Vauvert in Paris were equally feared. It is said that during the night the stumps of those trees changed into great hands, and caught hold of the passers-by.

As we have already mentioned, the Southwark folks instinctively shunned this alley between a prison and a

churchyard. In former times it had been barricaded during the night by an iron chain. Very unnecessarily, however, for the strongest chain which guarded the street was the terror it inspired.

Ursus entered it resolutely.

What object did he have in view? None.

He came into the alley to gain information, if possible.

Did he intend to knock at the gate of the jail? Certainly not. Such an expedient never once occurred to him. Did he hope to gain an entrance and ask an explanation? What arrant folly! Prisons do not open to those who wish to enter, any more than to those who desire to get out. Their hinges never turn except by law. Ursus knew this. Why, then, had he come here? To see. To see what? Nothing in particular. Even to be opposite the gate through which Gwynplaine had disappeared, was something.

Sometimes the blackest and most rugged of walls whispers, and some light escapes through a cranny. A vague glimmering is now and then visible through solid and sombre piles of building. Even to examine the envelope of a fact may be to some purpose. The instinct of us all is to leave between the fact which interests us and ourselves only the thinnest possible cover. Hence it was that Ursus hastened back to the alley in which the back entrance to the prison was situated.

Just as he entered it he heard one stroke of a bell, then a second.

"Hold," thought he; "can it be midnight already?"

He began to count mechanically.

"Three, four, five. At what long intervals this clock strikes!" he mused; "and how slowly! Six, seven!"

Then he remarked:—

"What a melancholy sound! Eight, nine! Still, nothing could be more natural; it's dull work for a

clock to live in a prison. Ten! Besides, there is the cemetery. This clock sounds the hour to the living, and eternity to the dead. Eleven! Alas! to strike the hour to him who is not free, is also to chronicle an eternity! Twelve!

He paused.

"Yes, it is midnight."

The clock struck a thirteenth stroke.

Ursus shuddered.

"Thirteen!"

Then followed a fourteenth; then a fifteenth.

"What can this mean?"

The strokes continued at long intervals. Ursus listened.

"It is not the striking of a clock; it is the bell Muta. No wonder I said, How long it takes to strike midnight. This clock does not strike; it tolls. What terrible thing is about to take place?"

Formerly all prisons, and all monasteries, had a bell called Muta, reserved for melancholy occasions. La Muta (the mute) was a bell which struck very low, as if trying its best not to be heard.

Ursus had reached the corner which he had found so convenient for his watch, and whence he had been able, during a great part of the day, to keep his eye on the prison.

The strokes followed each other at lugubrious intervals.

A knell makes an ugly punctuation in space. It breaks the preoccupation of the mind into gloomy paragraphs. A knell is like a man's death-rattle. If in the houses in the neighbourhood where a knell is tolled there are hopeful reveries floating about, the sound cuts them into rigid fragments. A vague reverie is a sort of refuge. Some indefinable diffuseness in anguish allows a ray of hope to penetrate it now and then. A knell is precise and deso-

lating. It concentrates this diffusion of thought, and precipitates the vapours in which anxiety seeks to remain in suspense. A knell speaks to each one in the sense of his own grief or of his own fear. Tragic bell! it concerns you. It is a warning to you. There is nothing so dreary as a soliloquy on which its cadence falls. The even returns of sound seem to show a purpose. What is it that this hammer, the bell, forges on the anvil of destiny?

Ursus counted, vaguely and aimlessly, the solemn strokes of the bell. Feeling that his thoughts were escaping his control, he made an effort not to let them merge into conjecture. Conjecture is an inclined plane, on which we slip too far. Still, what was the meaning of the bell?

He looked through the darkness in the direction in which he knew the gate of the prison to be.

Suddenly, in that very spot which looked like a dark hole, a redness appeared. The redness grew larger, and became a light.

There could be no doubt about it. It soon assumed a tangible form. The gate of the jail had just turned on its hinges and the glow illumined the arch and the jambs of the door. It was a yawning rather than an opening. A prison does not open; it yawns, — perhaps from *ennui*. Through the gate emerged a man with a torch in his hand.

The bell tolled on. Ursus felt his atttention riveted upon two objects. With his eye, he watched the torch; with his ear, he watched the knell. Behind the first man the gate, which had been only ajar, suddenly opened wider, and allowed egress to two other men; then to a fourth. This fourth was the wapentake, clearly visible in the light of the torch. His iron staff was in his hand.

Following the wapentake, there filed out in order, from beneath the gateway, two by two, slowly and noiselessly a procession of silent men.

The torchlight revealed their faces and attitudes clearly, — fierce looks, sullen attitudes.

Ursus recognized the faces of the police who had carried off Gwynplaine that morning.

There was no doubt about it. They were the same men. They were reappearing.

Of course, Gwynplaine would also reappear. They had taken him to that place. They would bring him back again.

It was all quite clear.

Ursus strained his eyes to the utmost. Would they set Gwynplaine at liberty ?

The long file of policemen flowed from the low arch slowly, and, as it were, drop by drop. The tolling of the bell continued, and seemed to mark their steps. On leaving the prison, the men turned their backs on Ursus, went to the right, towards the corner of the street opposite that at which he was posted.

A second torch shone under the gateway, denoting the end of the procession.

Ursus was about to see what they were bringing with them. The prisoner. The man.

Ursus was soon, he thought, to see Gwynplaine.

That which they carried appeared.

It was a bier.

Four men carried this bier, which was covered with black cloth.

Behind them came a man, with a shovel on his shoulder.

A third lighted torch, held by a man reading a book, probably the chaplain, closed the procession.

The bier followed the line of policemen, who had turned to the right.

Just at that moment the head of the procession stopped.

Ursus heard the grating of a key.

Opposite the prison, in the low wall which ran along the other side of the street, another opening was illuminated by a torch passing beneath it.

This gate, over which a death's head was placed, was the gate of the cemetery.

The wapentake passed through it, then the men, then the second torch. The procession disappeared within it, like a reptile entering his retreat.

The gate closed.

There was nothing left but a glimmer of light above the wall.

A muttering was heard; then some dull sounds, — made by the chaplain and the grave-digger, doubtless; one casting on the coffin some verses of Scripture, the other some clods of earth.

The muttering ceased; the dull sounds ceased. A stir was heard; the torches shone out again. The wapentake reappeared, holding his staff high in the air, under the re-opened gate of the cemetery; then the chaplain with his book, and the grave-digger with his spade emerged, followed by the rest of the *cortége*, without the coffin.

The files of men crossed over in the same order, with the same taciturnity, and in the opposite direction. The gate of the cemetery closed; that of the prison opened. The obscurity of the passage became vaguely visible; then the whole vision disappeared in the depths of shadow.

The knell ceased. All was locked in silence. A grim incarceration of shadows.

A vanished vision, — nothing more.

A passing of spectres, which had disappeared.

The logical arrangement of surmises constitutes some-

thing which at least resembles evidence. To the arrest of Gwynplaine, to the secret mode of his capture, to the return of his garments by the police officer, to the death knell at the prison to which he had been conducted, was now added a coffin carried to the grave.

"He is dead!" cried Ursus.

He sank down upon a stone.

"Dead! They have killed him! Gwynplaine! My child! My son!"

And he burst into passionate sobs.

CHAPTER V.

STATE POLICY DEALS WITH LITTLE MATTERS AS WELL AS WITH GREAT.

URSUS, alas! had boasted that he had never wept. So his reservoir of tears was full. Such plenitude as is accumulated drop by drop, sorrow on sorrow, through a long existence, is not to be poured out in a moment. Ursus wept long.

The first tear is a letting out of waters. He wept for Gwynplaine, for Dea, for himself, Ursus, for Homo. He wept like a child. He wept like an old man. He wept for everything at which he had ever laughed. He paid off arrears. Man is never nonsuited when he pleads his right to tears.

The corpse they had just buried was Hardquanonne's; but Ursus could not know that.

The hours crept on.

Day began to break. The pale light of dawn overspread the bowling-green and shone upon the front of the Tadcaster Inn. Master Nicless had not gone to bed, for sometimes the same occurrence produces sleeplessness in many.

Troubles radiate in every direction. Throw a stone in the water, and count the ripples.

Master Nicless felt himself in danger. It is very disagreeable that such things should happen in one's house. Master Nicless, uneasy, and foreseeing misfortunes, meditated. He regretted having received such people into his

house. Had he but known that they would end by getting him into mischief! But the question was, how to get rid of them? He had given Ursus a lease. What a blessing if he could free himself from it. How should he set to work to drive them out?

Suddenly the door of the inn resounded with one of those tumultuous knocks which in England announces "Somebody." The gamut of knocking corresponds with the ladder of hierarchy.

It was not quite the knock of a lord; but it was the knock of a justice.

The trembling inn-keeper half opened the window. It was indeed a magistrate. Master Nicless perceived at the door a number of police officers, with two men, one of whom was the justice of the quorum, at their head.

Master Nicless had seen the justice of the quorum that morning, and recognized him.

He did not know the other, who was a fat gentleman, with a waxen-coloured face, a fashionable wig, and a travelling cloak.

Nicless was much afraid of the first of these persons, the justice of the quorum. Had he been of the court, he would have feared the other most, because it was Barkilphedro.

One of the subordinates knocked at the door again, violently this time.

The inn-keeper, with great drops of perspiration on his brow, opened it.

The justice of the quorum, in the tone of an important official personage who is accustomed to deal with all sorts of vagabonds, raised his voice, and asked severely for —

"Master Ursus!"

The host, cap in hand, replied, —

"He lives here, your honour."

"I know it," said the justice.

"No doubt, your honour."

"Tell him to come down."

"He is not here, your honour."

"Where is he?"

"I do not know."

"How is that?"

"He has not come in."

"Then he must have gone out very early?"

"No; he went out very late."

"What vagabonds!" replied the justice.

"Here he comes, your honour," said Master Nicless, softly.

Ursus, indeed, had just appeared in sight, around a turn of the wall. He was returning to the inn. He had passed nearly the whole night between the jail, where at midday he had seen Gwynplaine, and the cemetery, where at midnight he had heard the grave filled up.

Dawn, which is light in a chrysalis state, leaves even those forms which are in movement in the uncertainty of night. Ursus, wan and indistinct, walked slowly, like a man in a dream.

In the wild distraction produced by his agony of mind, he had left the inn with his head bare. He had not even found out that he had no hat on. His sparse grey locks fluttered in the wind. His open eyes appeared sightless. Often when we seem awake we are asleep, and as often when we seem asleep we are really awake.

Ursus looked like one demented.

"Master Ursus," cried the inn-keeper, "come; their honours desire to speak to you."

Master Nicless, in his endeavour to soften matters, let slip this plural, "their honours," — respectful to the group, but mortifying, perhaps, to the chief, confounded thereby, to some degree, with his subordinates.

Ursus started like a man falling off a bed while he was sleeping soundly.

"What is the matter?" he asked.

He saw the police, with the justice at their head.

Another rude shock.

But a short time ago, the wapentake, now the justice of the quorum. He seemed to have been cast from one to the other, as ships are driven from reef to reef in old stories we have read.

The justice of the quorum motioned him to enter the tavern.

Ursus obeyed.

Govicum, who had just got up, and who was sweeping the room, stopped his work, got into a corner behind the tables, put down his broom, and held his breath. He plunged his fingers into his hair and scratched his head, a symptom which indicated profound attention to what was about to occur.

The justice of the quorum sat down on a bench, before a table. Barkilphedro took a chair. Ursus and Master Nicless remained standing. The police officers, left outside, grouped themselves in front of the closed door.

The justice of the quorum fixed his eye, full of the majesty of the law, upon Ursus, and said, —

"You have a wolf."

"Ursus answered, —

"Not exactly."

"You have a wolf," continued the justice, emphasizing "wolf" with a decided accent.

Ursus answered, —

"You see — "

And he was silent.

"A misdemeanour!" replied the justice.

Ursus hazarded an excuse: —

"He is my servant."

The justice placed his hand flat on the table, with his fingers spread out, which is a very fine gesture of authority.

"Merry-andrew! to-morrow, by this hour, you and your wolf must have left England. If not, the wolf will be seized, carried to the register office, and killed."

Ursus thought, "More murder!" but he breathed not a syllable, though he trembled in every limb.

"Do you hear?" said the justice.

Ursus nodded.

The justice persisted: —

"Killed."

There was silence.

"Strangled, or drowned."

The justice of the quorum watched Ursus.

"And you, yourself, cast into prison."

Ursus murmured, —

"Your worship!"

"Be off before to-morrow morning; if not, these orders will be carried out."

"Your worship!"

"What?"

"Must we leave England, he and I?"

"Yes."

"To-day?"

"To-day."

"What is to be done?"

Master Nicless was happy. The magistrate, whom he had so feared, had come to his aid. The police had acted as auxiliary to him, Nicless. They had delivered him from these people. The means he sought had been provided. Ursus, whom he wanted to get rid of, was being driven away by the police, — a superior authority. There was nothing to object to; on the contrary, he was delighted. He interrupted: —

"Your honour, that man —"

He pointed to Ursus with his finger.

"That man wants to know how he is to leave England to-day. Nothing could be easier. Night and day there are at anchor on the Thames, both on this and on the other side of London Bridge, vessels that sail to the continent. They go to Denmark, to Holland, to Spain; not to France, on account of the war, but everywhere else. Several ships will sail to-night, about one o'clock, which is the hour of high tide, and, among others, the 'Vograat' for Rotterdam."

The justice of the quorum made a movement of his shoulder towards Ursus.

"Be it so. Leave by the first ship, — by the 'Vograat.'"

"Your worship," said Ursus.

"Well?"

"Your worship, if I had, as formerly, only my little box on wheels, it might be done. A boat could carry that, but —"

"But what?"

"But now I have got the Green Box, which is a big van drawn by two horses, and however wide the ship might be, we could not get it aboard her."

"What is that to me?" said the justice. "The wolf will be killed, then."

Ursus shuddered, as if an icy hand had clutched his heart.

"Monsters!" he thought. "Murdering people is their way of settling matters."

The inn-keeper smiled, and addressed Ursus: —

"Master Ursus, you can sell the Green Box."

Ursus looked at Nicless.

"Master Ursus, you have an offer already, you recollect?"

"From whom?"

"An offer for the van, an offer for the two horses, an offer for the two gipsy-women, an offer —"

"From whom?" repeated Ursus.

"From the proprietor of the neighbouring circus."

Ursus remembered it.

"It is true."

Master Nicless turned to the justice of the quorum.

"Your honour, the bargain can be completed to-day. The proprietor of the circus close by wishes to buy the show and the horses."

"The proprietor of the circus is right," said the justice; "because he will soon require them. A van and horses will be useful to him. He, too, will depart to-day. The reverend gentlemen of the parish of Southwark have complained of the indecent riot in Tarrinzeau Field. The sheriff has taken measures accordingly. To-night there will not be a single juggler's booth in the place. There must be an end to all these scandals. The honourable gentleman who deigns to be here present —"

The justice of the quorum interrupted his speech to salute Barkilphedro, who returned the bow.

"The honourable gentleman who deigns to be present has just arrived from Windsor. He brings orders. Her Majesty has said, 'It must be swept away.'"

Ursus, during his long meditation all night, had not failed to ask himself some questions. After all, he had only seen a bier. Could he be sure that it contained Gwynplaine? Other people besides Gwynplaine might have died. A coffin does not announce the name of the corpse, as it passes by. A funeral had followed the arrest of Gwynplaine. That proved nothing. *Post hoc, non propter hoc*, etc. Ursus had begun to doubt.

Hope burns and glimmers over misery like naphtha over water. Its hovering flame ever floats over human sorrow. Ursus had come to this conclusion, "It is probable that it was Gwynplaine whom they buried, but it is

not certain. Who knows? — perhaps Gwynplaine is still alive."

Ursus bowed to the justice.

"Honourable judge, I will leave, — we will all leave by the 'Vograat,' for Rotterdam, to-day. I will sell the Green Box, the horses, the trumpets, the gipsies. But I have a comrade whom I cannot leave behind, — Gwynplaine."

"Gwynplaine is dead," said a voice.

Ursus felt a chilly sensation like that produced by a reptile crawling over the skin. It was Barkilphedro who had just spoken.

The last gleam of hope was extinguished. There could be no doubt now. Gwynplaine was dead. A person in authority must know, and this one looked ill-favoured enough to be so.

Ursus bowed to him.

Master Nicless was a good-hearted man enough, but a dreadful coward. Once terrified, he became a brute. The greatest cruelty is that inspired by fear.

He growled out, —

"This simplifies matters."

And standing behind Ursus, he began to rub his hands, a peculiarity of the selfish, signifying, "I am well out of it," and suggestive of Pontius Pilate washing his hands.

Ursus, overwhelmed, bowed his head upon his breast.

The sentence on Gwynplaine had been executed: Death. His sentence was pronounced: Exile. Nothing remained but to obey. He felt like one in a dream.

Some one touched his arm. It was the other person who was with the justice of the quorum. Ursus shuddered.

The voice which had said, "Gwynplaine is dead," whispered in his ear: —

"Here are ten guineas, sent you by one who wishes you well."

And Barkilphedro placed a little purse on a table before Ursus. We must not forget the casket that Barkilphedro had taken with him.

Ten guineas out of two thousand! It was all that Barkilphedro could make up his mind to part with. It was enough in all conscience. He had taken the trouble to find a lord; and having sunk the shaft, it was but fair that the first proceeds of the mine should belong to him. Those who see meanness in the act are right, but they are wrong to feel astonished. Barkilphedro loved money, especially stolen money. An envious man is always an avaricious one. Barkilphedro was not without his faults. The commission of crimes does not preclude the possession of vices. Tigers have lice as well as bats.

Besides, he belonged to the school of Bacon.

Barkilphedro turned towards the justice of the quorum, and said to him: —

"Sir, be so good as to conclude this matter. I am in haste. A carriage and horses belonging to her Majesty await me. I must go at full gallop to Windsor, for I must be there within two hours' time. I have information to give and orders to take."

The justice of the quorum arose.

He went to the door, which was only latched, opened it, and beckoned authoritatively to the police. They entered with that silence which heralds severity of action.

Master Nicless — satisfied with the rapid *dénouement* which cut short his difficulties — charmed to be out of the entangled skein, was afraid, when he saw the muster of officers, that they were going to arrest Ursus in his house. Two arrests — first that of Gwynplaine, then that of Ursus — would be injurious to the inn. Customers dislike police raids.

This, then, was the time for a respectful but generous appeal. Master Nicless turned towards the justice of the quorum a smiling face, in which confidence was tempered by respect.

"Your honour, I venture to observe to your honour that these honourable gentlemen, the police officers, might be dispensed with now that the wolf is about to be carried away from England, and that this man, Ursus, makes no resistance; and since your honour's orders are being promptly carried out, your honour will consider that the respectable presence of the police, so necessary to the good of the kingdom, does great harm to an establishment, and that my house is innocent. The merry-andrews of the Green Box having been swept away, as her Majesty says, there is no longer any criminal here, for I do not suppose that the blind girl and the two women are considered criminals; therefore, I implore your honour to deign to shorten your august visit, and to dismiss these worthy officers who have just entered, because there is nothing for them to do in my house; and, if your honour will permit me to prove the truth of my speech by means of an humble question, I will prove the uselessness of these respected gentlemen's presence by asking your honour, if the man Ursus obeys orders, and departs, who else can there be to arrest here?"

"Yourself," said the justice.

A man does not argue with a sword that runs him through and through. Master Nicless subsided, — he cared not on what, on a table, on a bench, on anything that happened to be there, — and lay there prostrate.

The justice raised his voice, so that if there were people outside, they might hear.

"Master Nicless Plumptree, keeper of this tavern, this is the last point to be settled. This mountebank and the wolf are vagabonds. They are driven away. But

the person most in fault is yourself. It is in your house, and with your consent, that the law has been violated; and you, a man licensed, invested with a public responsibility, have established this scandal here. Master Nicless, your license is taken away; you must pay the penalty, and go to prison."

The policemen surrounded the inn-keeper.

Pointing out Govicum, the justice continued,—

"Arrest that boy as an accomplice."

The hand of an officer fell upon the collar of Govicum, who looked at him inquisitively. The boy was not much alarmed, scarcely understanding the occurrence. Having observed so many strange things already, he wondered if this were the end of the comedy.

The justice of the quorum forced his hat down on his head, crossed his hands on his stomach, which is the height of majesty, and added, —

"It is decided, Master Nicless; you are to be taken to prison, and shut up, you and the boy; and this house, the Tadcaster Inn, is to remain condemned and closed for the sake of the example. Consequently, you will follow us."

BOOK VII.

THE TITANESS.

CHAPTER I.

THE AWAKENING.

AND Dea!

It seemed to Gwynplaine, as he watched the break of day at Corleone Lodge, while the things we have related were occurring at the Tadcaster Inn, that the call came from without — but it came from within.

Who has not heard the deep clamours of the soul?

Moreover, the morning was dawning.

Aurora is a voice.

Of what use is the sun, if not to re-awaken that sleeper, — the conscience?

Light and virtue are akin.

Whether the god be called Christ or Love, there is at times an hour when he is forgotten, even by the best. All of us, even the saints, require a voice to remind us, and the dawn speaks to us, like a sublime monitor. Conscience calls out before duty, as the cock crows before the dawn of day.

That chaos, the human heart, hears the *Fiat Lux!*

Gwynplaine — for so we will continue to call him; Clancharlie is a lord, Gwynplaine is a man — Gwynplaine felt as if he had been brought back to life. It was time that the artery was bound up.

For awhile his virtue had spread its wings and flown away.

"And Dea!" he said.

Then he felt a generous transfusion through his veins. Something healthy and tumultuous rushed in upon him. The violent irruption of good thoughts is like the return home of a man who has not his key, and who forces his own lock honestly. It is a burglary; but a burglary of evil.

"Dea! Dea! Dea!" repeated he.

He strove to assure himself of his heart's strength. And he put the question with a loud voice, "Where are you?"

He almost wondered that no one answered him.

Again, gazing at the walls and the ceiling, with wandering thoughts, through which an occasional gleam of reason penetrated, he almost shouted, "Dea, where are you? Where am I?"

And in the chamber which was his cage, he began to walk excitedly to and fro, like a wild beast in captivity.

"Where am I? At Windsor; and you in Southwark. Alas! this is the first time that there has been distance between us. Who has dug this gulf. I here, thou there. Oh! it cannot be; it shall not be! What is this that they have done to me?"

He stopped.

"Who talked to me of the queen? What do I know about such things? *I* changed! Why? Because I am a lord. Do you know what has happened, Dea? You are a lady. What has come to pass is astounding. My business now is to get back into the right road. Who was it that led me astray? There was a man who spoke to me very mysteriously. I remember the words which he addressed to me: 'My lord, when one door opens, the

other shuts. That which you have left behind is no longer yours.' In other words, you are a coward. That man, the miserable wretch! said that to me before I was fairly awake. He took advantage of my first moment of astonishment. I was as it were an easy prey. Where is he that I may insult him? He spoke to me with the evil smile of a demon. But see, I am myself again. That is well. They deceive themselves if they think that they can do what they like with Lord Clancharlie, a peer of England. Yes, and with a peeress, for if I am a peer, Dea is a peeress. Conditions! Shall I accept them! The queen! What is the queen to me? I never saw her. I did not become a lord to be made a slave. I enter upon my position unfettered. Do they think they have unchained me for nothing? They have unmuzzled me. That is all. Dea! Ursus! we are one. What you were, I was. What I am, you are. Come to me. No. I will go to you at once — at once! I have already waited too long. What can they think, not seeing me return! That money! When I think I sent them that money! It was me that they wanted. I remember the man said that I could not leave this place. We will see about that. Here! a carriage, a carriage! Harness the horses. I am going to look for them. Where are the servants? I ought to have plenty of servants here as I am a lord. I am master here. This is my house. I will twist off the bolts, I will break the locks, I will kick down the doors, I will run my sword through the body of any one who bars my passage. I should like to see who will dare to stop me. I have a wife, and she is Dea. I have a father, who is Ursus. My house is a palace, and I give it to Ursus. My name is a diadem, and I give it to Dea. Yes, Dea, I am coming; yes, you may be sure that I shall soon stride across the intervening space!"

And raising the first piece of tapestry he came to, he rushed impetuously from the chamber.

He found himself in a corridor.

He went straight forward.

A second corridor opened before him.

All the doors were open.

He walked on at random, from chamber to chamber, from passage to passage, seeking an exit.

CHAPTER II.

THE RESEMBLANCE OF A PALACE TO A WOOD.

IN palaces built after the Italian fashion, and Corleone Lodge was one, there were very few doors, but abundance of tapestry screens and curtained doorways.

In every palace of that date there was a wonderful labyrinth of chambers and corridors, where luxury ran riot; gilding, marble, carved wainscotting, Eastern silks; nooks and corners, some secret and dark as night, others light and pleasant as the day. There were cosey nooks, richly and gaily furnished; burnished recesses, shining with Dutch tiles and Portuguese azulejos. The thickness of the walls was such that there were rooms within them. Here and there were closets, nominally wardrobes. They were called "The Little Rooms." It was within them that many an evil deed was hatched.

When a Duke of Guise had to be killed, the pretty Présidente of Sylvecane abducted, or the cries of little girls brought thither by Lebel smothered, such places were very convenient for the purpose. They were labyrinthine chambers, impracticable to a stranger; scenes of abductions; wonderful aids to mysterious disappearances. In these elegant hiding-places, princes and lords stored their plunder. It was in such a place as this that the Count de Charolais hid Madame Courchamp, the wife of the Clerk of the Privy Council; Monsieur de Monthulé, the daughter of Haudry, the farmer of la Croix Saint Lenfroy; the Prince de Conti, the two beautiful baker women

of l'Ile Adam; the Duke of Buckingham, poor Pennywell, etc. The deeds done there were such as were designated by the Roman law as committed *vi, clam, et precario,* — by force, in secret, and for a short time. Once incarcerated, an occupant remained there till the master of the house decreed his or her release. They were gilded oubliettes, savouring both of the cloister and the harem. Their staircases twisted, turned, ascended, and descended. A zig-zag of rooms, one running into another, led back to the starting-point. A gallery terminated in an oratory. A confessional was grafted on to an alcove. Perhaps the architects of "the little rooms," built for royalty and aristocracy, took as models the ramifications of coral beds, and the openings in a sponge. The branches became a labyrinth. Pictures turning on false panels were exits and entrances. They were full of stage contrivances, and no wonder, considering the dramas that were played there. These hives reached from the cellar to the attic. Quaint madrepore inlaying every palace, from Versailles downwards, like cells of pygmies in dwelling-places of Titans. Passages, niches, alcoves, and secret recesses, — all sorts of nooks and corners, in which were secreted the meannesses of the great.

These narrow winding passages recalled games, blindfolded eyes, hands feeling in the dark, suppressed laughter, blind-man's-buff, hide-and-seek, while, at the same time, they suggested memories of the Atrides, of the Plantagenets, of the Medicis, of the brutal knights of Eltz, of Rizzio, of Monaldeschi, of naked swords, pursuing the fugitive flying from room to room.

The ancients, too, had mysterious retreats of the same kind, in which luxury was combined with enormities. The pattern has been preserved underground in some sepulchres in Egypt, notably in the tomb of King Psammetichus, discovered by Passalacqua. The ancient poets

have recorded the horrors of these suspicious buildings. *Error circumflexus. Locus implicitus gyris.*

Gwynplaine was in "the little rooms" of Corleone Lodge. He was burning to be off, to get outside, to see Dea again. The maze of passages and alcoves, with secret and bewildering doors, checked and retarded his progress. He tried to run, — he was obliged to grope. He thought that he had but one door to thrust open, while he had a skein of doors to unravel. Room succeeded room. Then came a cross-passage, with rooms on each side.

Not a living creature was to be seen. He listened. Not a sound.

At times he thought that he must be returning towards his starting-point; then, that he saw some one approaching. It was no one. It was only the reflection of himself in a mirror, dressed as a nobleman. *That* he? — Impossible! He recognized himself, but not at once.

He explored every passage that he came to.

He examined the quaint arrangements of the rambling building, and their yet quainter adornings. Here, a cabinet, painted and carved in a sentimental, but immodest style; there an equivocal-looking chapel, studded with enamels and mother-of-pearl, with miniatures on ivory wrought out in relief, like those on old-fashioned snuff-boxes; here, one of those pretty Florentine retreats, adapted to the hypochondriasis of women, and even then called *boudoirs*. Everywhere — on the ceilings, on the walls, and on the very floors — were representations, in velvet or metal, of birds, of trees; of luxuriant vegetation, picked out in reliefs of lace-work; tables covered with ebony carvings, representing warriors, queens, and tritons armed with the scales of a hydra. Cut crystals combined prismatic effects with those of reflection. Mirrors reflected the light of precious stones, and

gold glittered in the darkest corners. It was impossible to say whether these many-sided, shining surfaces, where emerald green mingled with the golden hues of the rising sun, where a glimmer of ever-varying colours like those on a pigeon's neck floated, were miniature mirrors, or enormous beryls. A magnificence which was at once refined and stupendous reigned everywhere. If this was not a palace, it was the most gigantic of jewel-cases. A house for Mab, or a jewel for Geo.

Gwynplaine sought an exit but could find none. There is nothing so confusing as splendour seen for the first time. Moreover, this was a labyrinth. At each step he was stopped by some magnificent object which appeared to retard his exit, and to be unwilling to let him pass. He was encompassed by a network of wonders. He felt himself bound and held back.

"What a horrible palace!" he thought.

He wandered on through the maze, asking himself what it all meant — whether he was really in prison longing and thirsting for the fresh air. "Dea! Dea!" he repeated again and again as if that name was the thread of the labyrinth, and must be held unbroken, to guide him out of it.

Now and then he shouted: —

"Here, here, I say!"

No one answered.

There seemed to be no end to the rooms. All was deserted, silent, splendid, sinister. It realized the fables of enchanted castles. Hidden pipes of hot air maintained a summer temperature in the building. It was as if some magician had caught up the month of June and imprisoned it in a labyrinth. There were pleasant odours now and then, and he crossed currents of perfume, as though passing invisible flowers. It was warm. Carpets everywhere. One might have walked about there, unclothed.

Gwynplaine looked out of the windows. The view from each one was different. From one he beheld gardens, sparkling with the freshness of a spring morning; from another, a plot decked with statues; from a third, a patio in the Spanish style, a little square, flagged, mouldy, and cold. At times he saw a river — it was the Thames; sometimes a great tower — it was Windsor.

It was still so early that there were no signs of life without.

He stood still and listened.

"I will get out of this place," said he. "I will return to Dea! They shall not keep me here by force. Woe to him who bars my exit. What is that great tower yonder? If there was a giant, a hell-hound, a minotaur, to guard the gates of this enchanted palace, I would annihilate him. If an army, I would exterminate it. Dea! Dea!"

Suddenly he heard a gentle noise, very faint. It was like dropping water. He was in a dark, narrow passage, closed, a few paces farther on, by a curtain. He advanced to the curtain, pushed it aside, and entered.

CHAPTER III.

EVE.

AN octagonal room, with a vaulted ceiling, without windows, but lighted by a skylight; walls, ceiling, and floors of peach-coloured marble; a black marble canopy, like a pall, with twisted columns in the solid but pleasing Elizabethan style, overshadowing a vase-like bath of the same black marble, — this was what he saw before him. In the centre of the bath arose a slender jet of tepid and perfumed water, which, softly and slowly, was filling the tank. The bath was black to augment fairness into brilliancy.

This was the water he had heard. A waste-pipe, placed at a certain height in the bath, prevented it from overflowing. Vapour was rising from the water; but not sufficiently to cause it to hang in drops on the marble. The slender jet of water was like a supple wand of steel, bending with the slightest current of air. There was no furniture, except a chair-bed with pillows, long enough for a woman to recline upon at full length, and yet have room for a dog at her feet. The French, indeed, borrow their word *canapé* from *can-al-pie*. This sofa was of Spanish manufacture. In it, silver took the place of woodwork. The cushions and coverings were of rich white silk.

On the other side of the bath, by the wall, was a lofty dressing-table of solid silver, furnished with every requisite for the toilet, having in the centre, in imitation of

a window, eight small Venetian mirrors, set in a silver frame. In a panel on the wall was a square opening, like a small window, which was closed by a door of solid silver. This door was fitted with hinges, like a shutter. On the door glittered a richly chased crown of gold. Over it, and affixed to the wall, was a bell, silver-gilt, if not of pure gold.

Opposite the entrance of the chamber, in which Gwynplaine stood as if transfixed, there was an opening in the marble wall, extending to the ceiling, and closed by a long, broad curtain of silver tissue.

This curtain, of fairy-like tenuity, was transparent, and did not obstruct the view. Through the centre of this web, where one might expect a spider, Gwynplaine saw a much more formidable object, — a naked woman.

Yet not quite naked; for she was covered — covered from head to foot. Her dress was a long chemise; so long that it floated over her feet, like the dresses of angels in holy pictures; but so fine that it seemed liquid. More treacherous and more perilous was this covering than naked beauty could have been. History has registered the procession of princesses and of great ladies between files of monks. Under pretext of naked feet and of humility, the Duchess de Montpensier showed herself to all Paris in a lace shift, with a wax taper in her hand.

The silver tissue, transparent as glass and fastened only at the ceiling, could be lifted aside. It separated the marble chamber, which was a bath-room, from the adjoining apartment, which was a bed-chamber. This tiny dormitory was as a grotto of mirrors. Venetian glasses, close together, mounted with gold, reflected on every side, the bed in the centre of the room. On the bed, which, like the toilet-table, was of silver, lay the woman; she was asleep.

She was sleeping with her head thrown back, one foot

peeping from its covering, like the Succuba, above whose heads dreams flap their wings.

Her lace pillow had fallen on the floor. Between her nakedness and the eye of the spectator were two obstacles, — her chemise and the curtain of silver gauze; two transparencies. The room, rather an alcove than a chamber, was only partially lighted by the reflection from the bath-room. Perhaps the light was more modest than the woman.

The bed had neither columns, nor daïs, nor top; so the woman, when she opened her eyes, could see herself reflected a thousand times in the mirrors above her head.

The crumpled bed-clothes bore evidence of troubled sleep. The beauty of the folds was proof of the quality of the material.

It was a period when a queen, thinking that she would be damned, pictured hell to herself as a bed with coarse sheets.

This fashion of sleeping partly undressed came from Italy, and was derived from the Romans. "*Sub clara nuda lacerna*," says Horace.

A dressing-gown of curious silk was thrown over the foot of the couch. It was apparently Chinese; for a great golden lizard was partly visible between the folds.

Beyond the couch, and probably concealing a door, was a large mirror, on which were painted peacocks and swans.

Shadow seemed to lose its nature in this apartment, and to glisten. The spaces between the mirrors and the gold work were lined with that sparkling material called in Venice thread of glass, — that is, spun glass.

At the head of the couch stood a reading-desk, on a movable pivot, with candles, and a book lying open, bearing this title, in large red letters: "*Alcoranus Mahumedis.*"

But Gwynplaine saw none of these details. He had eyes only for the woman.

He was at once stupefied and filled with tumultuous emotions, — states apparently incompatible, yet sometimes co-existent.

He recognized her.

Her eyes were closed, but her face was turned towards him. It was the duchess.

She, the mysterious being in whom all the splendours of the unknown were united; she who had occasioned him so many unavowable dreams; she who had written him so strange a letter! The only woman in the world of whom he could say, "She has seen me, and she desires me!"

He had dismissed the dreams from his mind; he had burned the letter. He had, as far as lay in his power, banished the remembrance of her from his thoughts and dreams. He had ceased to think of her. He had forgotten her. He saw her again!

He saw her again, and found her terrible in her power.

His breath came in short catches. He felt as if he were in a storm-driven cloud. He looked. This woman before him! Could it be? At the theatre, a duchess; here, a nereid, a nymph, a fairy. Always an apparition.

He tried to fly, but realized the futility of the attempt. His eyes were riveted on the vision, as though he were spellbound.

Was she a woman? Was she a maiden? Both. Messalina was, perhaps, present, though invisible, and smiled, while Diana kept watch.

Over all her beauty was the radiance of inaccessibility. No purity could compare with her chaste and haughty form. Certain snows, which have never been touched, give an idea of it, — such as the sacred whiteness of the Jungfrau. That which was represented by that uncon-

scious brow; by that rich, dishevelled hair; by the drooping lids; by those blue veins, dimly visible; by the sculptured roundness of her bosom, her hips, and her knees, indicated by delicate undulations seen through the folds of her drapery, was the divinity of a queenly sleep. Immodesty was merged into splendour. She was as calm in her nakedness as if she had the right to a god-like effrontery. She felt the security of an Olympian, who knew that she was daughter of the gods, and might say to the ocean, "Father!" And she exposed herself, unattainable and proud, to everything that might pass,— to looks, to desires, to ravings, to dreams; as proud in her languor, on her boudoir couch, as Venus in the immensity of the sea-foam.

She had slept all night, and was prolonging her sleep into the daylight; her boldness, begun in shadow, continued in light.

Gwynplaine shuddered.

He admired her with an unhealthy and absorbing admiration, which ended in terror.

Misfortunes never come singly. Gwynplaine thought he had drained the cup of ill-luck to the dregs. Now it was refilled. Who could it be that was hurling all these thunder-bolts on his devoted head, and who had now placed before him, as he stood trembling there, a sleeping goddess? What! was the dangerous and desirable object of his dream lurking all the while behind these successive glimpses of heaven? Did these whispers of the mysterious tempter tend to inspire him with vague aspirations and confused ideas, and overwhelm him with an intoxicating series of realities proceeding from apparent impossibilities? Wherefore did all the shadows conspire against him, wretched man that he was! and what would become of him, with all those evil smiles of fortune beaming on him? Had this temptation been pre-arranged?

This woman, how and why was she there? No explanation! Had he been made a Peer of England expressly for this duchess? Who had brought them together? Who was the dupe? Who the victim? Whose simplicity was being abused? Was it God who was being deceived? All these undefined thoughts passed confusedly, like a flight of dark shadows, through his brain. That magical and malevolent abode, that strange and prison-like palace, was that also in the plot? Gwynplain suffered a partial unconsciousness. Suppressed emotions threatened to strangle him. He was weighed down by an overwhelming force. His will became powerless. How could he resist?

This time he felt he was becoming irremediably insane. His headlong fall over the precipice of stupefaction continued.

But the woman slept on.

What aggravated the storm within him was, that he saw not the princess, not the duchess, not the lady, — but the woman.

Deviations from right exist in man, in a latent state. There is an invisible tracery of vice, ready prepared, in our organizations. Even when we are innocent, and apparently pure, it exists within us. To be stainless, is not to be faultless. Love is a law. Desire is a snare. There is a great difference between getting drunk once, and habitual drunkenness. To desire a woman, is the former; to desire women, the latter.

Gwynplaine, losing all self-command, trembled.

What could he do against such a temptation? Here were no skilful effects of dress, no silken folds, no complex and coquettish adornments, no affected exaggeration of concealment or of exhibition, no cloud. It was nakedness in fearful simplicity, — a sort of mysterious summons, the shameless audacity of Eden. The whole of the

dark side of human nature was there. Eve, worse than Satan; the human and the superhuman commingled. A perplexing ecstasy, winding up in a brutal triumph of instinct over duty. The sovereign contour of beauty is imperious. When it leaves the ideal and condescends to be real, its proximity is fatal to man.

Now and then the duchess moved softly on the bed, with the vague movement of a cloud in the heavens, changing as a vapour changes its form, composing and discomposing the charming curves of her body. Woman is as supple as water; and, like water, this one impressed an observer with the idea that it would be impossible to grasp her.

Absurd as it may appear, though he saw her there in the flesh before him, yet she seemed a chimera; and, palpable as she was, she seemed to him afar off. He listened to her breathing, and fancied he heard only a phantom's respiration. He was attracted, though against his will. How was he to arm himself against her — or against himself?

He had been prepared for everything except this danger. A savage door-keeper, a raging monster of a jailer — such were his expected antagonists. He had looked for Cerberus, he found Hebe.

A sleeping woman! What an opponent!

He closed his eyes. Too bright a light blinds the eyes. But through his closed eyelids there penetrated at once the woman's form, — not so distinct, but beautiful as ever.

Fly! Easier said than done. He had already tried and failed. He was rooted to the ground, as if in a dream. When we try to draw back, temptation clogs our feet, and glues them to the earth. We can still advance; but to retire is impossible. The invisible arms of sin rise from below and drag us down.

There is a common-place idea, accepted by nearly every one, that feelings become blunted by experience. Nothing can be more untrue. You might as well say that by dropping nitric acid slowly on a sore it would heal and become sound, and that torture dulled the sufferings of Damiens. The truth is, that each fresh application intensifies the pain. By reason of successive surprises, Gwynplaine had become desperate. That cup, his reason, overflowed under this new stupor. He felt within him a terrible awakening. Compass he no longer possessed. One idea only was before him, — the woman. An indescribable happiness appeared, which threatened to overwhelm him. He was no longer able to decide for himself. There was an irresistible current and a reef. The reef was not a rock, but a siren; a magnet at the bottom of the abyss. He wished to tear himself away from this magnet, — but how was he to carry out his wish? He had ceased to feel any basis of support. Who can foresee the fluctuations of the human mind? A man may be wrecked, as well as a ship. Conscience is an anchor. It is a terrible thing, but, like the anchor, conscience may be carried away.

He had not even the chance of being repulsed on account of his terrible disfigurement. The woman had written to say that she loved him.

In every crisis there is a moment when the scale hesitates before kicking the beam. When we lean to the worst side of our nature, instead of strengthening our better qualities, the moral force which has been preserving the balance gives way, and down we go. Had this critical moment in Gwynplaine's life arrived?

How could he escape?

So it is she! the duchess! the woman! There she was in that lonely room, — asleep, far from succour, helpless, alone, at his mercy, — yet he was in her power!

The duchess!

We have, perchance, observed a star in the distant firmament. We have admired it. It is so far off. What can there be to make us shudder in a fixed star? Well, one day — one night, rather — it moves. We perceive a trembling gleam around it. The star which we imagined to be immovable, is in motion. It is no longer a star, but a comet, — the incendiary giant of the skies. The luminary moves on, grows bigger, shakes off a shower of sparks and fire, and becomes enormous. It advances towards us. Oh, horror! it is coming our way! The comet recognizes us, marks us for its own, and will not be turned aside. Irresistible attack of the heavens! What is it that is bearing down upon us? An excess of light, which blinds us; an excess of life, which kills us. That proposal which the heavens make we refuse; that unfathomable love we reject. We close our eyes; we hide; we tear ourselves away; we imagine the danger is past. We open our eyes: the formidable star is still before us; but, no longer a star, it has become a world, — a world unknown, a world of lava and ashes; the devastating prodigy of space. It fills the sky, allowing no compeers. The carbuncle of the firmament's depths, the diamond in the distance, when it nears us becomes a seething furnace. You are caught in its flames.

Yet the first sensation of burning is that of a heavenly warmth.

CHAPTER IV.

SATAN.

SUDDENLY the sleeper awoke. She raised herself with a sudden and gracious dignity of movement, her fair silken tresses falling in soft disorder on her hips; her loosened night-dress disclosing her shoulder. She touched her pink toes with her little hand, and gazed for some moments on the naked foot, worthy to be worshipped by Pericles, and copied by Phidias; then stretching herself, she yawned like a tigress in the rising sun.

Perhaps Gwynplaine breathed heavily, as we often do when we endeavour to restrain our respiration.

"Is any one there?" said she.

She yawned as she spoke, and her very yawn was graceful.

Gwynplaine listened to the unfamiliar voice, — the voice of a charmer, its accents exquisitely haughty, its caressing intonation softening its native arrogance.

Then rising on her knees, — there is an antique statue kneeling thus in the midst of a thousand transparent folds, — she drew her dressing-gown towards her, and springing from the couch, stood upright by it, — nude; then, suddenly, with the swiftness of an arrow's flight, she was clothed. In a twinkling of an eye the silken robe was around her. The trailing sleeve concealed her hands; only the tips of her toes, with little pink nails like those of an infant, were left visible.

Having drawn from underneath the dressing-gown a mass of hair which had been imprisoned by it, she crossed behind the couch to the end of the room, and placed her ear to the painted mirror, which was, apparently, a door.

Tapping on the glass with her finger, she called, —

"Is any one there? Lord David? Are you come already? What time is it, then? Is that you, Barkilphedro?"

She turned from the glass.

"No! it was not there. Is there any one in the bathroom? Will you answer? Of course not. No one could come that way."

Going to the silver lace curtain, she raised it with her foot, thrust it aside with her shoulder, and entered the marble room.

An agonized numbness fell upon Gwynplaine. There was no possibility of concealment now. It was too late to fly. Moreover, he was no longer equal to the exertion. He wished that the earth would open and swallow him up. Anything to hide him.

She saw him.

She stared, immensely astonished, but without the slightest nervousness. Then, in a tone of mingled pleasure and contempt, she said, —

"Why, it is Gwynplaine!"

Suddenly, with a rapid spring, for this cat was a panther, she flung herself on his neck. She clasped his head between her naked arms, from which the sleeves, in her eagerness, had fallen back.

Suddenly, pushing him from her, and holding him by both shoulders with her small but powerful hands, she stood up face to face with him, and began to gaze at him with a strange expression.

It was a fatal glance she gave him with her Aldebaran-

like eyes, — a glance at once equivocal and star-like. Gwynplaine gazed at the blue eye and the black eye, distracted by the double ray of heaven and of hell that shone in the orbs thus fixed on him. The man and the woman threw a malign dazzling reflection one on the other. Both were fascinated, he by her beauty, she by his deformity. Both were in a measure awe-stricken. Pressed down as by an overwhelming weight, he was speechless.

"Oh!" she cried. "How clever you are! You are come. You found out that I was obliged to leave London. You followed me. That was right. Your being here proves you to be a wonder."

The simultaneous return of self-possession acts like a flash of lightning. Gwynplaine, indistinctly warned by a vague, rude, but honest misgiving, drew back, but the pink nails clung to his shoulders and restrained him. Some inexorable power proclaimed its sway over him. He, a wild beast himself, was caged in a wild beast's den

She continued, —

"Anne, the fool, you know whom I mean — the queen — ordered me to Windsor without giving any reason. When I arrived, she was closeted with her idiot of a chancellor. But how did you contrive to obtain access to me? That 's what I call being a man! Obstacles, indeed! There are no such things! My name, the Duchess Josiana, you knew, I fancy. Who was it brought you in? No doubt it was the page. Oh, he is clever! I will give him a hundred guineas. Which way did you get in? Tell me! No! don't tell me. I don't want to know. Explanations diminish interest. I prefer the marvellous, and you are hideous enough to be marvellous. You may have fallen from high heaven, or you may have risen from the depths of hell through the devil's trap-door. Nothing could be more natural. The

ceiling opened or the floor yawned. A descent in a cloud, or an ascent in a mass of fire and brimstone, that is the way you travelled. You have a right to enter like the gods, for are you not my lover?"

Gwynplaine listened bewildered, his will becoming more irresolute every moment. Any further doubt was impossible. That letter! this woman confirmed its statements. Gwynplaine the lover and the beloved of a duchess! Mighty pride, with its thousand baleful heads, stirred his wretched heart.

Vanity, that powerful factor within us, works us measureless evil.

The duchess went on: —

"As you are here, it must have been decreed. I ask nothing more. There must be some one in heaven, or in hell, who brings us together. The betrothal of Styx and Aurora! The very first day I saw you, I said, 'It is he! I recognize him. He is the monster of my dreams. He shall be mine.' We have to give destiny a helping hand. Therefore I wrote to you. One question, Gwynplaine, — do you believe in predestination? For my part, I have believed in it ever since I read Scipio's dream, in Cicero. Ah! I did not observe it before. Dressed like a gentleman! You in fine clothes! Why not? You are a mountebank. All the more reason. A juggler is as good as a lord. Moreover, what are lords? Clowns. You have a noble figure, you are magnificently made. It is wonderful that you should be here. When did you arrive? How long have you been here? I am beautiful, am I not? I was just going to take my bath. Oh, how I love you! You read my letter! Did you read it yourself or did some one read it to you? Can you read? Probably you are ignorant. I ask all these questions, but you need n't answer them. I don't like the sound of your voice. It is too soft. An extraordinary creature

like you should snarl, not speak. You sing harmoniously. I hate it. It is the only thing about you that I do not like. Everything else about you is grand and terrible. In India you would be a god. Were you born with that frightful laugh on your face? No! No doubt it is a penal brand. I do hope you have committed some crime. Come to my arms!"

She sank on the couch and made him sit beside her. They found themselves close together. What she said passed over Gwynplaine like a mighty storm. He hardly understood the meaning of the whirlwind of words. Her eyes were full of admiration. She spoke tumultuously, frantically, with a voice at once broken and tender. Her words were music; but their music affected Gwynplaine like a hurricane. Again she fixed her gaze upon him, and continued: —

"I feel degraded in your presence, and oh, what happiness that is! How insipid it is to be a grandee! What can be more tiresome? Disgrace is a comfort. I am so satiated with respect that I long for contempt. We are all a little erratic, from Venus, Cleopatra, Mesdames de Chevreuse and de Longueville down to myself. I will make a display of you, I declare I will. Here 's a love affair which will be a blow to my family, the Stuarts. Ah, I breathe again! I have discovered a secret. I am clear of royalty. To be free from its trammels is indeed deliverance. To break down, defy, make and destroy at will, — that is true enjoyment. Listen — I love you!"

She paused; then resumed, with a smile: —

"I love you, not only because you are deformed, but because you are low. I love monsters, and I love mountebanks. A lover despised, mocked, grotesque, hideous, exposed to laughter on that pillory called the stage, has an extraordinary attraction for me. It is a taste of the fruit of hell. A base-born lover, how exquisite! To

taste the apple, not of paradise, but of hell, — what a temptation! It is for that I hunger and thirst. I am an Eve, — an Eve of the depths. Probably you are, unbeknown to yourself, a devil. I am in love with a nightmare. You are the incarnation of infernal mirth. You are the master I require. I wanted a lover like Medea's and Canidia's. I felt sure that some night would bring me such an one. You are just what I want. I am talking of a heap of things you probably know nothing about. Gwynplaine, hitherto I have remained untouched; I give myself to you, pure as a burning ember. You evidently do not believe me; but if you only knew how little I care!"

Her words flowed like a volcanic eruption. Pierce Mount Etna, and you may obtain some idea of that jet of fiery eloquence.

"Madam —" stammered Gwynplaine.

But she placed her hand on his lips.

"Silence," she said. "I am studying you. I, myself, am a vestal bacchante. No man has known me, and I might be the virgin pythoness at Delphos, and have under my naked foot the bronze tripod, where the priests lean their elbows on the skin of the python, whispering questions to the invisible god. My heart is of stone, but it is like one of those mysterious pebbles which the sea washes up on the foot of the rock called Huntly Nabb, at the mouth of the Tees, and which if broken are found to contain a serpent. That serpent is my love, — a love which is all-powerful, for it has brought you to me. An impassable gulf was between us. I was in Sirius, and you were in Allioth. But you have crossed the immeasurable space, and here you are. 'T is well. Be silent. Take me."

She ceased; he trembled. Then she continued, smiling:

"You see, Gwynplaine, to dream is to create; to desire

is to summon. To build up the chimera is to provoke the reality. The all-powerful and terrible mystery will not be defied. You are here. Do I dare to lose caste? Yes. Do I dare to be your mistress, your concubine, your slave, your chattel? Joyfully. Gwynplaine, I am a woman. Woman is clay longing to become mire. I want to despise myself. That lends a zest to pride. The alloy of greatness is baseness. They combine perfectly. Despise me, you who are yourself despised. Nothing could be better. Degradation on degradation. What joy! I pluck the double blossom of ignominy. Trample me under foot. You will only love me the more. I am sure of it. Do you understand why I idolize you? Because I despise you. You are so immeasurably beneath me that I place you on an altar. Bring the highest and lowest depths together, and you have Chaos, and I delight in Chaos, — Chaos which is the beginning and end of everything. What is Chaos? A huge blot. Out of that blot God made light; and out of what was left, the world. You don't know how perverse I can be. Knead a star in mud, and you will have my likeness."

Thus spoke the siren, her loosened robe revealing her virgin bosom.

She went on: —

"A wolf to all besides; a faithful dog to you. How astonished they will all be! The astonishment of fools is amusing. I understand myself. Am I a goddess? Amphitrite gave herself to the Cyclops. 'Fluctivoma Amphitrite.' Am I a fairy? Urgele gave herself to Bugryx, a winged man, with eight webbed hands. Am I a princess? Marie Stuart had Rizzio. Three beauties, three monsters. I am greater than they, for you are lower than they. Gwynplaine, we were made for each other. The monster that you are outwardly, I am within. Hence my love for you. A caprice? Precisely.

What is a hurricane but a caprice? Our stars have a certain affinity. Together we are creatures of night, — you in face, I in mind. My mind is as deformed as your face. You come, and my real nature shows itself. I did not know it. It is astonishing. Your coming has evoked the hydra in me, who thought I was a goddess. You show me my real nature. See how much I resemble you. I did not know I was so terrible. So I too am a monster. Oh, Gwynplaine, you do amuse me!"

She laughed a strange, childlike laugh; and putting her mouth close to his ear, whispered, —

"Do you want to see a mad woman? Look at me."

She poured her searching eyes into Gwynplaine's. A look is the most potent of philtres. Her loosened robe provoked a thousand dangerous emotions. Blind, animal ecstasy was invading his mind, ecstasy combined with agony.

While she was speaking, though he felt her words like burning coals, his blood froze within his veins. He had not strength to utter a word.

She stopped, and looked at him.

"O monster!" she cried. She grew wild.

Suddenly she seized his hands.

"Gwynplaine, I am the throne; you are the footstool. Let us meet on the same level. Oh, how happy I am in my fall! I wish all the world could know how abject I am become. It would bow down all the lower. The more man abhors, the more does he cringe. It is human nature. Hostile, but reptile; dragon, but worm. Oh, I am as depraved as were the gods! They cannot say that I am not a king's daughter, for I act like a queen. Who was Rhodope but a queen who loved Pteh, a man with a crocodile's head? She erected the third pyramid in his honour. Penthesilea loved the centaur who is now the star called Sagittarius. And what do you think of Anne

of Austria? Mazarin was ugly enough! Now, you are not only ugly, but hideous. Ugliness is insignificant, deformity is grand. Ugliness is a devil's grin behind beauty; deformity is akin to sublimity. Olympus has two aspects, — one, by day, shows Apollo; the other, by night, shows Polyphemus. You! you are a Titan. You would be Behemoth in the forests, Leviathan in the deep, and Typhon in the sewer. You surpass everything. There is the trace of lightning in your deformity; your face has been battered by the thunder-bolt. The jagged contortion of forked lightning has imprinted its mark on your face. It struck you and passed on. A mighty and mysterious wrath has, in a fit of passion, cemented your spirit in a terrible and superhuman form. Hell is a penal furnace, where the iron called Fatality is raised to a white heat. You have been branded with it. To love you, is to understand grandeur. I enjoy that triumph. To be in love with Apollo, a fine effort, forsooth! Glory is to be measured by the astonishment it creates. I love you! I have dreamt of you night after night. This is my palace. You shall see my gardens. There are fresh springs under the shrubs, arbours for lovers, and beautiful groups of marble statuary by Bernini. Flowers! there are too many; during the spring the place is on fire with roses. Did I tell you that the queen is my sister? Do what you like with me. I was made for Jupiter to kiss my feet, and for Satan to spit in my face. What is your religion? I am a Papist. My father, James II., died in France, surrounded by Jesuits. I have never felt before as I feel now that I am with you. Oh, how I should like to pass the evening with you, in the midst of music, both reclining on the same cushion, under a purple awning, in a gilded gondola on the broad expanse of ocean. Insult me, beat me, kick me, cuff me, treat me like a brute! I adore you!"

Caresses can roar. If you doubt it, observe the lion's. The woman was terrible, and yet full of grace. The effect was tragical. First he felt the claw, then the velvet of the paw. A feline attack, made up of advances and retreats. There was death as well as sport in this game of come and go. She idolized him, but arrogantly. The result was a contagious frenzy. Fatal language, at once inexpressible, violent, and sweet. The insulter did not insult; the adorer outraged the object of adoration. She, who buffeted, deified him. Her tones imparted to her violent yet amorous words an indescribable Promethean grandeur.

According to Æschylus, in the orgies in honour of the great goddess, the women were smitten by this same evil frenzy when they pursued the satyrs under the stars. Such paroxysms raged in the mysterious dances in the grove of Dodona. This woman was transfigured, — if, indeed, we can term that transfiguration which is the antithesis of heavenly. Her hair quivered like a mane; her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. The sunshine of the blue eye mingled with the fire of the black one. She was unearthly in her loveliness.

Gwynplaine felt himself vanquished by the deep subtilty of this attack.

"I love you!" she cried.

And she stung him with a kiss.

Homeric clouds were, perhaps, about to be required to encompass Gwynplaine and Josiana, as they did Jupiter and Juno. For Gwynplaine to be loved by a woman who could see, and who saw him; to feel on his deformed mouth the pressure of divine lips, was exquisite and maddening. In the presence of this woman, so full of enigmas, everything else faded away in his mind. The remembrance of Dea still struggled in the shadows but weakly. There is an antique bas-relief representing the

Sphinx devouring a Cupid. The wings of the sweet celestial are bleeding between the fierce, grinning fangs.

Did Gwynplaine love this woman? Has man, like the earth, two poles? Are we, on our inflexible axis, a moving sphere, — a star when seen from afar, mud, when seen more closely, in which night alternates with day? Has the heart two sides, — one on which love is poured forth in light, the other in darkness; here upon a divinity of light, there upon a creature of the slums? Angels are necessary. Is it possible that demons are also essential? Has the soul the wings of the bat? Does twilight fall fatally for all? Is sin an integral and inevitable part of our destiny? Must we accept evil as a part and portion of our whole? Do we inherit sin as a debt? What awful subjects for thought!

Yet a voice tells us that weakness is a crime. Gwynplaine's feelings are not to be described. The flesh, life, terror, lust, an overwhelming intoxication of spirit, and all the shame possible to pride. Was he about to succumb?

She repeated, "I love you!" and flung her frenzied arms around him. Gwynplaine panted for breath.

Suddenly, a little bell close by, rang out clearly and distinctly. It was the little bell on the wall. The duchess, turning her head, exclaimed petulantly, —

"What can she want of me?"

The silver panel, with the golden crown embossed on it, opened.

The end of a shaft, lined with royal blue velvet, appeared; and, on a golden salver, a letter.

The letter, which was broad and bulky, was so placed as to exhibit the seal, which was a large impression in red wax. The bell continued to tinkle. The open panel almost touched the couch where the duchess and Gwynplaine were sitting.

Leaning over, but still keeping her arm round his neck, she took the letter from the plate, and touched the panel.

The compartment closed, and the bell ceased ringing.

The duchess broke the seal, and opening the envelope, drew out the two documents contained therein, and flung it on the floor at Gwynplaine's feet.

The impression of the broken seal was still decipherable, and Gwynplaine could distinguish a royal crown over the initial A.

The torn envelope lay open before him, so that he could read, "To her Grace the Duchess Josiana."

The envelope had contained both vellum and parchment. The former was a small, the latter a large, document. On the parchment was a large Chancery seal in green wax.

The face of the duchess, whose bosom was palpitating, and whose eyes were swimming with passion, became overspread with a slight expression of dissatisfaction.

"Ah!" she said. "What has she sent to me? A lot of papers! What a spoil-sport the woman is!"

Throwing aside the parchment, she opened the vellum.

"It is her handwriting. It is my sister's hand. It is quite provoking. Gwynplaine, I asked you if you could read. Can you?"

Gwynplaine nodded assent.

She stretched herself at full length on the couch, carefully drawing her feet and arms under her robe, with a whimsical affectation of modesty, and giving Gwynplaine the vellum, watched him with an impassioned look.

"You are mine. Begin your duties, my beloved. Read me what the queen writes."

Gwynplaine took the vellum, unfolded it, and in a voice tremulous with conflicting emotions, began to read: —

Madam, — We are graciously pleased to send to you herewith, sealed and signed by our trusty and well-beloved William Cowper, Lord High Chancellor of England, a copy of a report, setting forth the very important fact that the legitimate son of Linnæus, Lord Clancharlie has just been discovered and recognized, bearing the name of Gwynplaine, in the lowest ranks of life, among vagabonds and mountebanks. His false position dates from his earliest childhood. In accordance with the laws of the country, and in virtue of his hereditary rights, Lord Fermain Clancharlie, son of Lord Linnæus, will be this day admitted, and installed in his position in the House of Lords. Therefore, having regard to your welfare, and wishing to preserve for your use the property and estates of Lord Clancharlie of Hunkerville, we substitute him in the place of Lord David Dirry-Moir, and recommend him to your good graces. We have caused Lord Fermain to be conducted to Corleone Lodge. We will and command, as sister and as queen, that the said Fermain Lord Clancharlie, hitherto called Gwynplaine, shall be your husband, and that you shall marry him. Such is our royal pleasure.

While Gwynplaine, in tremulous tones which varied at almost every word, was reading the document, the duchess, half risen from the couch, listened with fixed attention. When Gwynplaine finished, she snatched the letter from his hands.

"*Anne R.*," she murmured in a tone of abstraction.

Then picking up the parchment she had thrown aside, she ran her eye over it. It was the confession of the shipwrecked crew of the "Matutina," embodied in a report signed by the sheriff of Southwark and by the Lord Chancellor.

Having perused the report, she read the queen's letter over again. Then she said: "Be it so." And calmly pointing with her finger to the door of the gallery through which he had entered, she added: "Begone!"

Gwynplaine sat as if petrified.

"As you are to be my husband, begone!" she repeated in icy tones.

Then as Gwynplaine, speechless, and with eyes downcast like a criminal, remained motionless, she added, —

"You have no right to be here; it is my lover's place."

Gwynplaine was like a man transfixed.

"Very well," said she, "then I must go myself. So you are to be my husband. Nothing could be better. I hate you!"

She rose, and with an indescribably haughty gesture of adieu, left the room. The curtain in the doorway leading to the gallery fell behind her.

CHAPTER V.

THEY RECOGNIZE, BUT DO NOT KNOW, EACH OTHER.

GWYNPLAINE was alone.

The confusion in his mind had reached its culminating point. His thoughts no longer resembled thoughts. They overflowed and ran riot; it was the anguish of a creature wrestling with perplexity. He felt as if he were waking from a horrible nightmare. The entrance into unknown spheres is no simple matter.

From the time he had received the duchess's letter, brought by the page, a series of surprising adventures had befallen Gwynplaine, each one less intelligible than the other. Up to this time, though in a dream, he had seen things clearly. Now he could only grope his way. He no longer thought, or even dreamed. He collapsed.

He sank down upon the couch which the duchess had vacated.

Suddenly, he heard a sound of footsteps, — the footsteps of a man. The noise came from the opposite side of the gallery from that by which the duchess had departed. The man approached, and his footsteps, though softened by the carpet, were clear and distinct. Gwynplaine, in spite of his abstraction, listened.

Suddenly, beyond the silver web of curtain which the duchess had left partly open, a door, evidently concealed by the painted glass, opened wide, and there came floating into the room the refrain of an old French song, carolled at the top of a manly and joyous voice, —

"Trois petits gorets sur leur fumier
Juraient comme de porteurs de chaise,"

and a man entered. He had a sword at his side, wore a magnificent naval uniform, covered with gold lace, and held in his hand a plumed hat with loops and cockade.

Gwynplaine sprang up erect, as if moved by springs. He recognized the man, and was in turn recognized by him.

From their astonished lips came, simultaneously, this double exclamation, —

"Gwynplaine!"

"Tom-Jim-Jack!"

The man with the plumed hat advanced towards Gwynplaine, who stood with folded arms.

"What are you doing here, Gwynplaine?"

"And you, Tom-Jim-Jack, what are you doing here?

"Oh, I understand. Josiana! a caprice. A mountebank and a monster! The double attraction was too powerful to be resisted. So you disguised yourself in order to get here, Gwynplaine?"

"And you, too, Tom-Jim-Jack?"

"Gwynplaine, what does this gentleman's dress mean?"

"Tom-Jim-Jack, what does that officer's uniform mean?"

"Gwynplaine, I answer no questions."

"Neither do I, Tom-Jim-Jack."

"Gwynplaine, my name is not Tom-Jim-Jack."

"Tom-Jim-Jack, my name is not Gwynplaine."

"Gwynplaine, I am in my own house."

"And I, too, am in my own house, Tom-Jim-Jack."

"I will not have you echo my words. You are ironical; but I've got a cane. Cease your jokes, you wretched fool."

Gwynplaine became ashy pale.

"You are a fool yourself, and you shall give me satisfaction for this insult."

"Yes, in your booth with fisticuffs."

"No, here, and with swords!"

"My friend, Gwynplaine, the sword is a weapon for gentlemen. I can only fight my equals with it. At fisticuffs we are equal; but not so with swords. At the Tadcaster Inn, Tom-Jim-Jack could box with Gwynplaine. At Windsor, the case is very different. Understand this; I am a rear-admiral."

"And I am a Peer of England."

The man whom Gwynplaine knew as Tom-Jim-Jack burst out laughing.

"Why not a king? Indeed, you are right. An actor plays every part. You'll tell me next that you are Theseus, Duke of Athens."

"I am a Peer of England, and we are going to fight."

"Gwynplaine, this is growing tiresome. Don't play with one who can order you to be flogged. I am Lord David Dirry-Moir."

"And I am Lord Clancharlie."

Again Lord David burst out laughing.

"Well said! Gwynplaine, Lord Clancharlie! That is indeed the name the man must bear who is to win Josiana. Listen, I forgive you; would you know the reason? It's because we are both lovers of the same woman."

The curtain of the door was lifted, and a voice exclaimed, —

"You are the two husbands, my lords."

They turned.

"Barkilphedro!" cried Lord David.

It was indeed he. He bowed low to the two lords, with a smile on his face.

Some few paces behind him was a gentleman with a stern and dignified countenance, who carried a black

wand in his hand. This gentleman advanced, and bowing three times to Gwynplaine, said, —

"I am the Usher of the Black Rod. I am come to fetch your lordship in obedience to her Majesty's commands."

BOOK VIII.

THE CAPITOL AND THINGS AROUND IT.

CHAPTER I.

ANALYSIS OF MAJESTIC MATTERS.

IRRESISTIBLE Fate which had for so many hours showered its surprises on Gwynplaine, and which had transported him to Windsor, now transported him back to London.

Startling realities succeeded each other without a moment's intermission. He could not escape their influence. He was freed from one, only to encounter another. He had scarcely time to breathe.

Any one who has seen a juggler throwing and catching balls can judge the nature of fate. Those rising and falling projectiles are like men tossed in the hands of Destiny, — mere playthings.

On the evening of the same day Gwynplaine was an actor in an extraordinary scene. He was seated on a bench covered with *fleurs-de-lis;* over his silken clothes he wore a robe of crimson velvet, lined with white silk, with a cape of ermine, and on his shoulders two bands of ermine embroidered with gold. Around him were men of all ages, young and old, seated like him on benches covered with *fleurs-de-lis,* and dressed like him in ermine and velvet. In front of him other men were kneeling, clothed in black silk gowns. Some of them were writ-

ing; opposite, and a short distance from him, he observed steps, a raised platform, a daïs, a large escutcheon glittering between a lion and a unicorn, and at the top of the steps, on the platform under the daïs, resting against the escutcheon, was a gilded chair with a crown over it. This was the throne.

The throne of Great Britain.

Gwynplaine, himself a Peer of England, was in the House of Lords. How Gwynplaine's introduction to the House of Lords came about, we will now explain.

Throughout the entire day, from morning until night, from Windsor to London, from Corleone Lodge to Westminster Hall, he had, step by step, mounted higher in the social grade. At each step he grew giddier.

He had been conveyed from Windsor in a royal carriage with a peer's escort. There is not much difference between a guard of honour, and a prisoner's. On that day travellers on the London and Windsor road saw a galloping cavalcade of gentlemen pensioners of her Majesty's household, escorting two carriages drawn at a rapid pace. In the first carriage sat the Usher of the Black Rod, his wand in his hand. In the second could be seen a large hat with white plumes, casting into shadow and hiding the face underneath it. Who was it who was being thus hurried on — a prince? a prisoner?

It was Gwynplaine.

It looked as if they were conducting some one to the Tower, unless, indeed, they were escorting him to the House of Lords. The queen had done things well. As it was for her future brother-in-law, she had provided an escort from her own household. The officer of the Usher of the Black Rod rode on horseback at the head of the cavalcade. The Usher of the Black Rod carried, on a cushion placed on a seat of the carriage, a black portfolio, stamped with the royal crown.

At Brentford, the last relay before London, the carriages and escort halted.

A four-horse carriage of tortoise-shell, with two postilions, a coachman in a wig, and four footmen, was in waiting. The wheels, steps, springs, pole, and all the fittings of this carriage were gilt. The horses' harness was of silver.

This state coach was of ancient and extraordinary shape, and would have been distinguished by its grandeur among the fifty-one celebrated carriages of which Roubo has left us drawings.

The Usher of the Black Rod and his officer alighted. The latter, having lifted the cushion on which the royal portfolio rested from the seat in the post-chaise, held it on outstretched hands, and stood behind the Usher, who first opened the door of the empty carriage, then the door of that occupied by Gwynplaine, and, with downcast eyes, respectfully invited him to descend.

Gwynplaine left the chaise, and took his seat in the carriage.

The Usher carrying the rod, and the officer supporting the cushion, followed, and took their places on the low front seat provided for pages in old state coaches. The inside of the carriage was lined with white satin, with tufts and tassels of silver. The roof was painted with armorial bearings. The postilions of the chaises they were leaving were dressed in the royal livery. The attendants of the carriage they now entered wore a different but very magnificent livery.

Gwynplaine, in spite of his bewildered state, noticed the gorgeously attired footmen, and asked the Usher of the Black Rod: —

"Whose livery is that?"

He answered, —

"Yours, my lord."

The House of Lords was to sit that evening. *Curia erat serena*, run the old records. In England, parliamentary work is by preference undertaken at night. It once happened that Sheridan began a speech at midnight and finished it at sunrise.

The two post-chaises returned to Windsor. Gwynplaine's carriage set out for London.

This highly ornamented four-horse carriage proceeded at a walk from Brentford to London, as befitted the dignity of the bewigged coachman. Gwynplaine's slavery to ceremony was beginning in the shape of his solemn-looking coachman. The delay was, moreover, apparently pre-arranged; and we shall see its probable motive presently.

Night was falling, though it was not quite dark, when the carriage stopped at the King's Gate, — a large sunken door between two turrets, connecting Whitehall with Westminster. The escort of gentlemen pensioners formed a circle around the carriage. A footman jumped down from behind it and opened the door.

The Usher of the Black Rod, followed by the officer carrying the cushion, got out of the carriage, and addressed Gwynplaine: —

"My lord, be pleased to alight. I beg your lordship to keep your hat on."

Gwynplaine wore under his travelling cloak the suit of black silk, which he had not changed since the previous evening. He had no sword. He left his cloak in the carriage. Under the archway of the King's Gate there was a small side door, raised a few steps above the ground. In ceremonial processions the greatest personage never walks first.

The Usher of the Black Rod, followed by his officer, walked first; Gwynplaine followed. They ascended the steps, and entered by the side door. Presently they

reached a wide, circular room, with a pillar in the centre, — the lower part of a turret. The room, being on the ground-floor, was lighted by narrow lancet windows, which served only to make darkness visible. Twilight often lends solemnity to a scene. Obscurity is in itself majestic.

In this room, thirteen men, disposed in ranks, were standing; three in the front row, six in the second row, and four behind. One man in the front row wore a crimson velvet gown; the other two, gowns of the same colour, but of satin. All three had the arms of England embroidered on their shoulders. The second rank wore tunics of white silk, each one having a different coat-of-arms emblazoned in front. The men in the last row were clad in black silk, and were distinguished thus: the first wore a blue cape; the second had a St. George embroidered in scarlet upon his breast; the third, two embroidered crimson crosses, one in front and one behind; the fourth wore a collar of black sable fur. All were uncovered, wore wigs, and carried swords. Their faces were scarcely visible in the dim light, neither could they see Gwynplaine's face.

The Usher of the Black Rod, raising his wand, said:

"My Lord Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville, I, the Usher of the Black Rod, first officer of the presence chamber, hand your lordship over to Garter King-at-Arms."

The person clothed in velvet, quitting his place in the ranks, bowed to the ground before Gwynplaine, and said, —

"My Lord Fermain Clancharlie, I am Garter, Principal King-at-Arms of England. I am the officer appointed and installed by his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, hereditary Earl Marshal. I have sworn obedience to the king, peers, and knights of the garter. The day of my installa-

tion, when the Earl Marshal of England anointed me by pouring a goblet of wine on my head, I solemnly promised to be attentive to the nobility; to avoid bad company; to excuse, rather than accuse, gentlefolks; and to assist widows and virgins. It is I who have the charge of arranging the funeral ceremonies of peers, and the supervision of their armorial bearings. I place myself at the orders of your lordship."

The first of those wearing the satin tunics, having bowed deeply, said, —

"My lord, I am Clarenceaux, Second King-at-Arms of England. I am the officer who arranges the obsequies of nobles below the rank of peers. I am at your lordship's disposal."

The other wearer of the satin tunic, bowed, and spoke thus: —

"My lord, I am Norroy, Third King-at-Arms of England. Command me."

The second row, erect and without bowing, advanced a pace. The right-hand man said, —

"My lord, we are the six Dukes-at-Arms of England. I am York."

Then each of the heralds, or Dukes-at-Arms, speaking in turn, proclaimed his title: —

"I am Lancaster."

"I am Richmond."

"I am Chester."

"I am Somerset."

"I am Windsor."

The coats-of-arms embroidered on their breasts were those of the counties and towns from which they took their names.

The third rank, dressed in black, remained silent. Garter King-at-Arms, pointing them out to Gwynplaine, said, —

"My lord, these are the four Pursuivants-at-Arms. Blue Mantle."

The man with the blue cape bowed.

"Rouge Dragon."

He with the St. George inclined his head.

"Rouge Croix."

He with the scarlet crosses saluted.

"Portcullis."

He with the sable fur collar made his obeisance.

At a sign from the King-at-Arms, the first of the pursuivants, Blue Mantle, stepped forward and received from the officer of the Usher the cushion of silver cloth, and crown-emblazoned portfolio. And the King-at-Arms said to the Usher of the Black Rod: —

"Proceed; I leave the introduction of his lordship in your hands!"

The observance of these customs, and also of others which will be described hereafter, were the old ceremonies in use prior to the time of Henry VIII., and which Anne for some time attempted to revive. There is nothing like them in existence now. Nevertheless, the House of Lords thinks that it is unchangeable; and, if Conservatism exists anywhere, it is there.

It changes, nevertheless. *E pur si muove.*

For instance, what has become of the May-pole, which the citizens of London erected on the 1st of May, when the peers went down to the House? The last one was erected in 1713. Since then the May-pole has disappeared.

Outwardly, unchangeable; inwardly, mutable. Take, for example, the title of Albemarle. It sounds eternal. Yet it has been through six different families, — Odo, Mandeville, Bethune, Plantagenet, Beauchamp, Monck. Into the title of Leicester, five different names have been merged, — Beaumont, Breose, Dudley, Sydney, Coke.

Into Lincoln, six; into Pembroke, seven. The families change under unchanging titles. A superficial historian believes in immutability. In reality, it does not exist. Man can never be more than a wave; humanity is the ocean.

Aristocracy is proud of what women consider a reproach, — age! Yet both cherish the same illusion, — that they do not change.

It is probable the House of Lords will not recognize itself in the foregoing description, nor yet in that which follows, thus resembling the once pretty woman, who objects to having any wrinkles. The mirror is ever a scapegoat, yet its truths cannot be contested.

To portray exactly, constitutes the duty of an historian.

The King-at-Arms, turning to Gwynplaine, said, —

"Be pleased to follow me, my lord."

And he added, —

"You will be saluted. Your lordship, in returning the salute, will be pleased merely to raise the brim of your hat."

They moved off, in procession, towards a door at the farther end of the room. The Usher of the Black Rod walked in front; then Blue Mantle, carrying the cushion; then the King-at-Arms; and after him Gwynplaine, wearing his hat. The rest, kings-at-arms, heralds, and pursuivants, remained in the circular room.

Gwynplaine, preceded by the Usher of the Black Rod, and escorted by the King-at-Arm, passed from room to room, in a direction which it would now be impossible to trace, the old houses of Parliament having been pulled down.

Among others, he crossed that Gothic state-chamber in which the last meeting of James II. and Monmouth took place, and whose walls witnessed the useless humiliation of the cowardly nephew at the feet of his vin-

dictive uncle. On the walls of this chamber hung, in chronological order, nine full-length portraits of former peers, with their dates, — Lord Nansladron, 1305; Lord Baliol, 1306; Lord Benestede, 1314, Lord Cantilupe, 1356; Lord Montbegon, 1357; Lord Tibotot, 1373; Lord Zouch of Codnor, 1615; Lord Bella-Aqua, with no date; Lord Harren and Surrey, Count of Blois, also without date.

It being dark now, lamps were burning at intervals in the galleries. Brass chandeliers, with wax candles, illuminated the rooms, lighting them like the side aisles of a church.

None but officials were present.

In one room, which the procession crossed, stood the four clerks of the signet, and the Clerk of the Council, with heads respectfully bowed.

In another room stood the distinguished Knight Banneret, Philip Sydenham, of Brympton, in Somersetshire. The Knight Banneret is a title conferred in time of war, under the unfurled royal standard.

In another room was the senior baronet of England, Sir Edmund Bacon, of Suffolk, heir of Sir Nicholas Bacon, styled, *Primus baronetorum Anglia*. Behind Sir Edmund was an armour-bearer with an arquebus, and an esquire carrying the arms of Ulster, the baronets being the hereditary defenders of the province of Ulster in Ireland.

In another room was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with his four accountants, and the deputies of the Lord Chamberlain.

At the entrance of a corridor covered with matting, which connected the Lower and the Upper House, Gwynplaine was saluted by Sir Thomas Mansell, of Margam, Comptroller of the Queen's Household and Member for Glamorgan; and at the exit from the corridor by a deputation of one for every two of the Barons of the Cinque

Ports, four on the right and four on the left, the Cinque Ports being eight in number. William Hastings did obeisance for Hastings; Matthew Aylmor, for Dover; Josias Burchett, for Sandwich; Sir Philip Boteler, for Hythe; John Brewer, for New Rumney; Edward Southwell, for the town of Rye; James Hayes, for Winchelsea; George Nailor, for Seaford.

As Gwynplaine was about to return the salute, the King-at-Arms reminded him in a low voice of the etiquette.

"Only the brim of your hat, my lord."

Gwynplaine did as directed.

He now entered the so-called Painted Chamber, in which there were no paintings, except a few pictures of saints, Saint Edward among them, in the high arches of the long and deep-pointed windows, which were cut in two by a platform that formed the ceiling of Westminster hall and the floor of the Painted Chamber.

On the further side of the wooden barrier which divided the room from end to end, stood the three Secretaries of State, men of mark. The functions of the first of these officials comprised the supervision of all affairs relating to the south of England, Ireland, the Colonies, France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Turkey. The second had charge of the north of England, and watched affairs in the Low Countries, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, and Russia. The third, a Scot, had charge of Scotland. The two first mentioned were English, one of them being the Honourable Robert Harley, Member for the borough of New Radnor. A Scotch member, Mungo Graham, Esquire, a relation of the Duke of Montrose, was present. All bowed, without speaking, to Gwynplaine, who returned the salute by touching his hat.

The door-keeper lifted the wooden rail which barred

the entrance to the other side of the Painted Chamber, where stood the long table, covered with green cloth, reserved for peers. An immense candelabrum was on the table. Gwynplaine, preceded by the Usher of the Black Rod, Garter King-at-Arms, and Blue Mantle, penetrated into this privileged compartment. The gate-keeper closed the opening immediately Gwynplaine had passed. The King-at-Arms, having entered the precincts of the privileged compartment, halted.

The Painted Chamber was a spacious apartment. At the farther end, beneath the royal escutcheon which was placed between the two windows, stood two old men, in red velvet robes trimmed with ermine, and gold lace on their shoulders, and wearing wigs, and hats with white plumes. Through the openings of their robes one caught a glimpse of silken garments and sword-hilts.

Motionless behind them stood a man dressed in black silk, holding on high a great mace of gold surmounted by a crowned lion.

It was the Mace-bearer of the Peers of England.

The lion is their crest. "Et les Lions ce sont les Barons et li Per," runs the manuscript chronicle of Bertrand Duguesclin.

The King-at-Arms pointed out the two persons in velvet, and whispered to Gwynplaine: —

"My lord, these are your equals. Be pleased to return their salute exactly as they make it. These two peers are barons, and have been named by the Lord Chancellor as your sponsors. They are very old, and almost blind. They will introduce you to the House of Lords. The first is Charles Mildmay, Lord Fitzwalter, sixth on the roll of barons; the second is Augustus Arundel, Lord Arundel of Trerice, thirty-eighth on the roll of barons."

The King-at-Arms having advanced a step towards the two old men, proclaimed: —

"Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie, Baron Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone, in Sicily, greets your lordships!"

The two peers raised their hats as high as they could reach and then replaced them.

Gwynplaine did the same.

The Usher of the Black Rod stepped forward, followed by Blue Mantle and Garter King-at-Arms. The Mace-bearer took up his position in front of Gwynplaine, the two peers at his side, Lord Fitzwalter on the right, and Lord Arundel of Trerice on the left. Lord Arundel, the elder of the two, was very feeble. He died the following year, bequeathing to his grandson John, a minor, the title, which became extinct in 1768.

The procession, leaving the Painted Chamber, entered a gallery supported by pilasters, and in the arches thus formed, were stationed guards, — English pike-men and Scottish halberdiers alternately. The Scotch halberdiers were magnificent looking soldiers, worthy to contend later on, at Fontenoy, with the French cavalry, and the royal cuirassiers, whom their colonel addressed thus: "Messieurs les maitres, assurez vos chapeaux. Nous allons avoir l'honneur de charger."

The captain of these soldiers saluted Gwynplaine, and the peers, his sponsors, with their swords. The men saluted with their pikes and halberds.

At the end of the gallery shone a large door, so magnificent that it seemed to be a mass of gold. On each side of the door stood the door-keepers, erect and motionless.

Just before you came to this door, the gallery widened out into a large circular space. In this space stood an arm-chair with an immense back, and upon it, judging by his wig and from the amplitude of his robes, sat a highly distinguished personage. It was William Cowper, Lord Chancellor of England.

To be able to cap a royal infirmity with a similar one has its advantages. William Cowper was short-sighted. Anne was also troubled with defective vision, but in a lesser degree. The near-sightedness of William Cowper found favour in the eyes of the short-sighted queen, and induced her to appoint him Lord Chancellor, and Keeper of the Royal Conscience. William Cowper's upper-lip was thin, and his lower one thick, — a sign of tolerable good-nature.

This circular space was lighted by a lamp hung from the ceiling. The Lord Chancellor was sitting gravely in his large arm-chair; at his right was the Clerk of the Crown, and at his left the Clerk of Parliament.

Each of the clerks had before him an open register and an ink-horn.

Behind the Lord Chancellor was his mace-bearer, holding the mace with the crown on the top, besides his train-bearer and purse-bearer in large wigs.

All these offices are still in existence. On a little stand, near the wool-sack, was a sword, with a gold hilt and sheath, and belt of crimson velvet.

Behind the Clerk of the Crown was an officer holding in his hands the coronation robe.

Behind the Clerk of Parliament another officer held a second robe, which was that of a peer.

The robes, both of scarlet velvet, lined with white silk, and having bands of ermine edged with gold lace over the shoulders, were alike, except that the ermine band was wider on the coronation robe.

The third officer, who was the librarian, carried on a square of Flanders leather, the red book, — a little volume bound in red morocco, containing a list of the peers and commons, besides a few blank leaves and a pencil, which it was the custom to present to each new member upon entering the House.

Gwynplaine, between the two peers, his sponsors, brought up the end of the procession, which stopped before the wool-sack.

The two peers, who introduced him, uncovered their heads, and Gwynplaine did likewise.

The King-at-Arms, on receiving from the hands of Blue Mantle the cushion of silver cloth, knelt down, and presented the portfolio on the cushion to the Lord Chancellor.

The Lord Chancellor took the portfolio, and handed it to the Clerk of Parliament.

The Clerk received it ceremoniously, and then sat down.

The Clerk of Parliament then opened the portfolio, and arose.

The portfolio contained the two usual messages, — the royal patent addressed to the House of Lords, and the writ of summons.

The Clerk read these two messages aloud, with respectful deliberation, standing the while.

The writ of summons, addressed to Fermain Lord Clancharlie, concluded with the usual formalities: —

"We strictly enjoin you, by the faith and allegiance that you owe, to come and take your place in person among the prelates and peers sitting in our Parliament at Westminster, for the purpose of giving your advice, in all honour and conscience, on the business of the kingdom and of the Church."

The reading of the message being concluded, the Lord Chancellor raised his voice: —

"The message of the Crown has been read. Lord Clancharlie, does your lordship renounce transubstantiation, adoration of saints, and the Mass?"

Gwynplaine bowed.

"The test has been administered," said the Lord Chancellor.

And the Clerk of Parliament resumed, —

"His lordship has taken the test."

The Lord Chancellor added, —

"My Lord Clancharlie, you can now take your seat."

"So be it," said the two sponsors.

The King-at-Arms rose, took the sword from the stand, and buckled it round Gwynplaine's waist.

"Ce faict," says the old Norman charter, "le pair prend son espée et monte aux hauts siéges, et assiste a l'audience."

Gwynplaine heard a voice behind him, saying: —

"I array your lordship in a peer's robe."

At the same time, the officer who spoke to him, and who was holding the robe, placed it on him, and tied the strings of the ermine cape round his neck.

Gwynplaine, with the scarlet robe on his shoulders, and the golden sword by his side, was now attired like the peers to the right and left of him.

The librarian presented the red book to him, and put it in his waistcoat pocket.

The King-at-Arms murmured in his ear: —

"My lord, on entering, will bow to the royal chair."

The royal chair is the throne.

Meanwhile the two clerks were writing, each at his table, — one in the register of the Crown; the other in the register of the House.

Then both — the Clerk of the Crown preceding the other — brought their books to the Lord Chancellor, who signed them. Having signed the two registers, the Lord Chancellor rose.

"Fermain Lord Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie, Baron Hunkerville, Marquis of Corleone in Sicily, be welcome among your peers, the lords spiritual and temporal, of Great Britain."

Gwynplaine's sponsors touched his shoulder.

He turned round.

The double portals of the great gilded door at the end of the gallery opened.

It was the door of the House of Lords.

Only thirty-six hours had elapsed since Gwynplaine, surrounded by a very different retinue, entered the iron door of Southwark jail.

What wild chimeras had passed, with terrible rapidity, through his brain! Chimeras which were facts; rapidity which amounted to a capture by assault.

CHAPTER II.

IMPARTIALITY.

THE creation of an equality with the king called the peerage, was, in barbarous epochs, a useful fiction. This rudimentary political expedient produced in France and England entirely different results however. In France, the peer was a mock king; in England, a real prince, — less pretentious than in France, but more genuine.

This so-called peerage originated in France; the date is uncertain, — under Charlemagne, says the legend; under Robert le Sage, says history; and history is no more to be relied on than legend. Favin writes: "The King of France wished to attach to himself the great of his kingdom, by the magnificent title of peers, as if they were his equals."

Peerage soon thrust forth branches, and from France passed over to England.

The English peerage has been a great and almost a mighty institution. It had for precedent the Saxon witenagemot. The Danish thane and the Norman vavasour commingled in the baron. Baron is the same as vir, which is translated into Spanish by *varon*, and which signifies, *par excellence*, "Man." As early as 1075, the barons made their power felt by the king — and by what king? By no less a personage than William the Conqueror. In 1086 they laid the foundation of feudality, and its basis was the "Doomsday Book."

Under John Lackland came conflict. The French peerage undertook to carry things with a high hand with Great Britain, and demanded that the King of England should appear at their Bar. Great was the indignation of the English barons. At the coronation of Philip Augustus, the King of England, as Duke of Normandy, carried the first square banner, and the Duke of Guyenne, the second. Against this king, a vassal of the foreigner, the War of the Barons burst forth. The barons wrested from the weak-minded King John the Magna Charta, from which sprung the House of Lords. The pope sided with the king, and excommunicated the Lords. The date was 1215, and the pope was Innocent III., who wrote the "Veni Sancte Spiritus," and who sent to John Lackland the four cardinal virtues in the shape of four gold rings. The Lords persisted. The conflict continued through many generations. Pembroke struggled valiantly. 1248 was the year of "the provisions of Oxford." Twenty-four barons limited the king's powers, censured him, and called upon a knight from each county to take part in the widened breach. This was the beginning of the House of Commons. Later on, the Lords added two citizens from each city, and two burgesses from each borough. The result of this was that, up to the time of Elizabeth, the peers were judges of the validity of elections to the House of Commons. From their jurisdiction sprang the proverb that the members returned must be without the three P's — *sine Prece, sine Pretio, sine Poculo.* This did not obviate rotten boroughs however. In 1293, the Court of Peers in France still had the King of England under their jurisdiction, and Philippe le Bel cited Edward I. to appear before him. Edward I. was the king who ordered his son to boil him down after death, and to carry his bones to the wars. The follies of their kings

made the Lords feel the necessity of strengthening Parliament. They divided it into two chambers, the upper and the lower. The Lords arrogantly maintained the supremacy. "If it happens that any member of the Commons should be so bold as to speak to the prejudice of the House of Lords, he is called to the bar of the House to be reprimanded, and, sometimes, to be sent to the Tower." There is the same distinction in voting. In the House of Lords they vote one by one, beginning with the junior, called the puisne baron. Each peer answers "Content," or "Not content." In the Commons they vote together, by "Ay," or "No," in a crowd. The Commons accuse, the peers judge. The peers, in their contempt for figures, delegated to the Commons, who were to profit by it, the superintendence of the Exchequer, so called, according to some, after the table-cover, which was like a chess-board, and according to others, from the drawers of the old safe, where the treasure of the kings of England was kept behind an iron grating. The "Year-Book" dates from the end of the thirteenth century. In the War of the Roses, the influence of the Lords was thrown, now on the side of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, now on the side of Edmund, Duke of York. Wat Tyler, the Lollards, Warwick, the king-maker, all the anarchy from which freedom was to spring, had for its real or pretended foundation, the English feudal system. The Lords were usefully jealous of the Crown; for to be jealous is to be watchful. They circumscribed the royal prerogatives, diminished the category of cases of high treason, raised up pretended Richards against Henry IV., appointed themselves arbitrators, decided the question of the three crowns between the Duke of York and Margaret of Anjou, levied armies if necessary, and fought the battles of Shrewsbury, Tewkesbury, and St. Albans, sometimes

winning, sometimes losing. Before this, in the thirteenth century, they had gained the battle of Lewes, and had driven from the kingdom the four brothers of the king, bastards of Queen Isabella by the Count de la Marche; all four usurers, who extorted money from Christians by means of the Jews; half princes, half sharpers, — a thing common enough in more recent times, but not regarded with favour in those days. Up to the fifteenth century the Norman duke peeped out in the King of England, and the acts of Parliament were written in French. From the reign of Henry VII., by the will of the Lords, these were written in English. England, Briton under Uther Pendragon; Roman under Cæsar; Saxon under the Heptarchy; Danish under Harold; Norman after William, then became, thanks to the Lords, English. After that she became Anglican. To have a home religion is a great advantage. A foreign pope drags down the national life. A Mecca is an octopus that devours it. In 1534, London bowed Rome out. The peerage adopted the reformed religion, and the Lords accepted Luther. Here we have the answer to the excommunication of 1215. It was agreeable to Henry VIII.; but in other respects the Lords were a trouble to him. As a bulldog to a bear, so was the House of Lords to Henry VIII. When Wolsey robbed the nation of Whitehall, and when Henry robbed Wolsey of it, who complained? Four Lords, — Darcie of Chichester; Saint John, of Bletsho; and (two Norman names) Mountjoie and Mounteagle. The king encroached, the peerage protested. There is something in hereditary power which is incorruptible. Hence the insubordination of the Lords. Even in Elizabeth's reign the barons were restless. From this resulted the tortures at Durham. Elizabeth assembled Parliament as rarely as possible, and reduced the House of Lords to sixty-five

members, among whom there was but one marquis (Winchester), and not a single duke. In France the kings felt the same jealousy, and carried out the same elimination. Under Henry III. there were not more than eight dukedoms in the peerage; and it was to the great annoyance of the king that the Baron de Mantes, the Baron de Coucy, the Baron de Coulommiers, the Baron de Chateauneuf-en-Thimerais, the Baron de la Fère-en-Tardenois, the Baron de Mortagne, and several others, persisted in declaring themselves barons, — peers of France. In England, the Crown saw the peerage diminish with pleasure. Under Anne, to quote but one example, the peerages which had become extinct since the twelfth century amounted to five hundred and sixty-five. The War of the Roses began the extermination of dukes, which the axe of Mary Tudor completed. There was a wholesale decapitation of the nobility. Good policy, perhaps; but it is better to corrupt than to decapitate, — at least, James I. was of this opinion. He restored dukedoms. He made a duke of his favourite Villiers, — a change from the feudal duke to the courtier duke. This sowing was to bring forth a rank harvest: Charles II. made two of his mistresses duchesses, — Barbara of Southampton and Louise de la Queroual of Portsmouth. Under Anne there were twenty-five dukes, of whom three were foreigners, Cumberland, Cambridge, and Schomberg. Did this court policy, invented by James I., succeed? No. The House of Peers was incensed by this effort to shackle it. It was incensed against James I., it was incensed against Charles I., who may have had something to do with the death of his father, just as Marie de Medicis may have had something to do with the death of her husband. There was a rupture between Charles I. and the peerage. The Lords who, under James I., had tried at their bar,

extortion, in the person of Bacon, under Charles I. tried treason, in the person of Strafford. They had condemned Bacon, — they condemned Strafford. One had lost his honour, the other lost his life. Charles I. was first beheaded in the person of Strafford. The Lords lent their aid to the Commons. The king convened Parliament in Oxford, the revolution convened it in London. Forty-three peers sided with the king, twenty-two with the Republic. From this union of the people with the Lords arose the Bill of Rights, — a sketch of the French *Droits de l'homme;* a vague shadow flung back from the depths of futurity by the revolution of France on the revolution of England.

Such were the services of the peerage, — involuntary ones, we admit, and dearly purchased, because the said peerage is a huge parasite, — but valuable services, nevertheless.

The despotic work of Louis XI., of Richelieu, and of Louis XIV., the creation of a sultan, the degradation of the people, — all these Turkish tricks practised in France, the peers prevented in England. The aristocracy was a wall, restraining the king on one side, sheltering the people on the other. They atoned for their arrogance towards the people by their insolence towards the king. Simon, Earl of Leicester said to Henry III.: "King, thou hast lied!" The Lords curbed the Crown, and touched their kings in the tenderest point, that of venery. Every lord, passing through a royal park, had the right to kill a deer; in the house of the king the peer was at home; in the Tower of London the allowance for the king was no more than that for a peer; namely, twelve pounds sterling per week. This was the House of Lords' doing.

Yet more. We owe to it the deposition of kings. The Lords ousted John Lackland, degraded Edward II.,

deposed Richard II., broke the power of Henry VI., and made Cromwell a possibility. What a Louis XIV. there was in Charles I.! Thanks to Cromwell, it remained latent. By-the-bye, we may here observe that Cromwell himself, though no historian seems to have noticed the fact, aspired to the peerage. This was why he married Elizabeth Bouchier, descendant and heiress of a Cromwell, Lord Bouchier, whose peerage became extinct in 1471, and of a Bouchier, Lord Robesart, another peerage extinct in 1429. Carried on with the formidable increase of important events, he found the suppression of a king a shorter road to power than the recovery of a peerage. Two men-at-arms from the Tower, with their axes on their shoulders, between whom an accused peer stood at the bar of the House, might have been there in like attendance on the king. For five centuries the House of Lords acted on a system, and carried it out with determination. They had their days of idleness and weakness, — as, for instance, that strange time when they allowed themselves to be seduced by the vessels loaded with cheeses, hams, and Greek wines sent them by Julius II. The English aristocracy was generally restless, haughty, ungovernable, watchful, and patriotically distrustful. It was that same aristocracy which, at the end of the seventeenth century, by Act the Tenth of the year 1694, deprived the borough of Stockbridge, in Hampshire, of the right of sending members to Parliament, and forced the Commons to declare null the election for that borough, stained by papistical fraud. It imposed the test oath on James, Duke of York, and on his refusal to take it, excluded him from the throne. He reigned, notwithstanding; but the Lords finally called him to account, and banished him. That same aristocracy has had, in its long duration, some instinct of progress. It has always

given out a certain quantity of appreciable light except now towards its end, which is close at hand. Under James II. it maintained in the Lower House the proportion of three hundred and forty-six burgesses against ninety-two knights. The sixteen barons, by courtesy, of the Cinque Ports were more than counterbalanced by the fifty citizens of the twenty-five cities. Though corrupt and egotistic, that aristocracy was, in many instances, singularly impartial. It has been harshly criticised. History keeps all its compliments for the Commons. The justice of this is doubtful. We consider the part played by the Lords a very important one. Oligarchy is the independence of a barbarous State, but it is an independence. Take Poland, for instance, which is nominally a kingdom, but really a republic. Time after time, the peers of England have made their power more felt than that of the Commons. They have held the king in check again and again. Thus, in that memorable year, 1694, the Triennial Parliament Bill, rejected by the Commons, in consequence of the objections of William III., was passed by the Lords. William III., in his irritation, deprived the Earl of Bath of the governorship of Pendennis Castle, and Viscount Mordaunt of all his offices. The House of Lords was the republic of Venice in the heart of the royalty of England. To reduce the king to a doge was its object; and in proportion as it decreased the power of the crown, it increased that of the people. Royalty knew this, and hated the peerage. Each endeavoured to lessen the other. What was thus lost by each was a proportionate gain to the people. Those two blind powers, monarchy and oligarchy, could not see that they were working for the benefit of a third, which was democracy. What a pleasure it was to the Crown in the last century, to be able to hang a peer, — Lord Ferrers.

However, they hung him with a silken rope. How polite!

"They would not have hung a peer of France," the Duke of Richelieu haughtily remarked. Granted. They would have beheaded him. Still more polite!

Montmorency Tancarville signed himself "peer of France and England," thus throwing the English peerage into the second rank. The peers of France were more arrogant but less powerful, attaching more importance to precedence than to authority. There was between them and the Lords that shade of difference which distinguishes vanity from pride. To take precedence of foreign princes, of Spanish grandees, of Venetian patricians; to see seated on lower benches the Marshals of France, the Constable and the Admiral of France, even if he were a Comte de Toulouse or son of Louis XIV.; to draw a distinction between duchies in the male and female line; to maintain the proper distance between a simple *comté* like Armagnac or Albret, and a *comté pairie*, like Evreux; to wear by right, at five-and-twenty, the blue ribbon of the Golden Fleece; to counterbalance the Duc de la Tremoille, the most ancient peer of the court, with the Duke Uzès, the most ancient peer of the Parliament; to claim as many pages and horses to their carriages as an elector; to be called "Monseigneur" by the first President; to discuss whether the Duc de Maine ranked as a peer, like the Comte d'Eu, from 1458; to cross the grand chamber diagonally, or by the side,—such things were grave matters with the peers of France. The matters of paramount importance with the English peers were the Navigation Act, the Test Act, the enrollment of Europe in the service of England, the control of the sea, the expulsion of the Stuarts, and war with France. On one side, etiquette above all; on the other, empire above all.

The peers of England had the substance, the peers of France the shadow.

To conclude, the House of Lords had an object. As a civilizing agent its influence was immense. It had the honour to found a nation. It was the first embodiment of the unity of the people: English resistance, that obscure but all-powerful force, was born in the House of Lords. The barons, by a series of revolts against royalty, have paved the way for its eventual downfall. The House of Lords at the present time is rather grieved and astonished at what it has unwittingly and unintentionally done, — all the more, in fact, because it is irrevocable.

What are concessions? Restitutions, — and the people know it.

"I grant," says the king.

"I am getting back my own," says the people.

The House of Lords believed that it was ensuring the privileges of the peerage, but it has created the rights of the citizen. That vulture, aristocracy, has hatched the eagle's egg, — liberty.

And now the egg is broken, the eagle is soaring, the vulture is dying.

Aristocracy is at its last gasp; England is growing up.

Still, let us be just towards the aristocracy. It entered the scale against royalty, and was its counterpoise. It was an obstacle to despotism. It was a barrier.

Let us thank it and bury it.

CHAPTER III.

THE OLD HALL.

NEAR Westminster Abbey was an old Norman palace which was burnt in the time of Henry VIII. Its wings were spared. In one of them Edward VI. placed the House of Lords, in the other the House of Commons. Neither the two wings nor the two chambers are now in existence. The whole has been rebuilt.

We have already said, and we must repeat, that there is no resemblance between the House of Lords of the present day, and that of the past. In demolishing the ancient palace, they demolished its ancient usages. The strokes of the pickaxe on the monument produce their counter-strokes on customs and charters. An old stone cannot fall without dragging an old law down with it. Place in a round room a parliament which has hitherto been held in a square room, and it will no longer be the same thing. A change in the shape of the shell changes the shape of the fish inside.

If you wish to preserve an old thing, human or divine, a code or a dogma, a nobility or a priesthood, never repair anything about it thoroughly, even its outside cover. Patch it up, nothing more. For instance, Jesuitism is a piece added to Catholicism. Treat edifices as you would treat institutions. Shadows should dwell in ruins. Worn-out powers are uneasy in freshly decorated chambers. Ruined palaces harmonize best with tattered institutions. To attempt to describe the House of Lords of other days would be to attempt to describe the un-

known. History is night. That which is no longer on the stage immediately fades into obscurity. The scene is shifted, and all is forgotten. The past has a synonym, — the Unknown.

The peers of England sat as a court of justice in Westminster Hall, and as the higher legislative chamber in a chamber specially reserved for the purpose, called The House of Lords.

In addition to the House of Peers, which did not assemble as a court, unless convoked by the Crown, two great English tribunals, inferior to the House of Peers, but superior to all other jurisdiction, sat in Westminster Hall. They occupied adjoining apartments at the end of the hall. The first was the Court of King's Bench, over which the king was supposed to preside; the second, the Court of Chancery, over which the chancellor presided. The one was a court of justice, the other a court of mercy. It was the chancellor who counselled the king to pardon, — very rarely, however.

These two courts, which are still in existence, interpreted the laws, and reconstructed them somewhat, for it is the business of the judge to carve the code into jurisprudence, — a process not infrequently plays sad havoc with justice. Legislation was worked up and sternly applied in the great hall of Westminster, the rafters of which were of chestnut wood, over which spiders could not spread their webs. There are enough of them in all conscience in the laws.

To sit as a court, and to sit as a chamber, are two distinct things. This double function constitutes supreme power. The Long Parliament, which began in November, 1640, felt the revolutionary necessity for this two-edged sword. So it declared that, as House of Lords, it possessed judicial as well as legislative power.

This double power has been, from time immemorial, vested in the House of Peers. We have just mentioned that as judges they occupied Westminster Hall; as legislators they had another chamber. This other chamber, properly called the House of Lords, was oblong and narrow. All the light in it came from four windows in deep embrasures, which received their light through the roof, and a bull's-eye, composed of six panes with curtains, over the throne. At night there was no light save that which came from twelve candelabra, fastened to the wall. The chamber of Venice was darker still. A dim light is always preferred by these owl-like personages.

A vaulted ceiling adorned with many-faced relievos and gilded cornices surmounted the chamber where the Lords assembled. The Commons had a flat ceiling. There is a hidden meaning in all monarchical buildings. At one end of the long chamber of the Lords was the door; at the end opposite to it, the throne. A few paces from the door, the bar, a transverse barrier, marked the spot where the people ended and the peerage began. To the right of the throne was a fireplace with emblazoned pinnacles, and two bas-reliefs of marble, representing, one, the victory of Cuthwolf over the Britons, in 572; the other, the geometrical plan of the borough of Dunstable, which had four streets, parallel to the four quarters of the world. The throne was approached by three steps. It was called the royal chair. On the two walls, opposite each other, were displayed in successive pictures on a huge piece of tapestry, given to the Lords by Elizabeth, the adventures of the Armada, from the time of its leaving Spain, until it was wrecked on the coast of Great Britain. The great hulls of the ships were embroidered with threads of gold and silver, which had become blackened by time.

Against this tapestry, cut at intervals by the candelabra fastened in the wall, were placed, to the right of the throne, three rows of benches for the bishops, and to the left three rows of benches for the dukes, marquises, and earls, in tiers, and separated by aisles. On the three benches of the first section sat the dukes; on those of the second, the marquises; on those of the third, the earls. The viscounts' bench was placed across, opposite the throne, and behind, between the viscounts and the bar, were two benches for the barons.

On the highest bench to the right of the throne sat the two archbishops of Canterbury and York; on the middle bench, the bishops of London, Durham, and Winchester, and the other bishops on the lowest bench. Between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the other bishops there is this great difference, he is bishop "by divine Providence," while the others are only so "by divine permission." To the right of the throne was a chair for the Prince of Wales, and to the left, folding chairs for the royal dukes, and behind the latter a raised seat for minor peers, who had not the privilege of voting. Plenty of *fleurs-de-lis* everywhere, and the great escutcheon of England over the four walls, above the peers, as well as above the king.

The sons of peers, and the heirs to peerages, assisted at the debates, standing behind the throne, between the daïs and the wall. A large square space was left vacant between the tiers of benches placed along three sides of the chamber and the throne. In this space, which was covered with the state carpet, interwoven with the arms of Great Britain, were four wool-sacks, one in front of the throne, between the mace and the seal, occupied by the Lord Chancellor; one in front of the bishops, on which sat the judges, Counsellors of State, who had the

right to be present, but not to vote; one in front of the dukes, marquises, and earls, on which sat the Secretaries of State; and one in front of the viscounts and barons, on which sat the Clerk of the Crown and the Clerk of Parliament, and on which the two under-clerks wrote, kneeling.

In the middle of the space was a large covered table, heaped with bundles of papers, registers, and summonses, with magnificent ink-stands of chased silver, and with high candlesticks at the four corners.

The peers took their seats in chronological order, each according to the date of the creation of his peerage. They ranked according to their titles, and within each grade of nobility according to their seniority. At the bar stood the Usher of the Black Rod, a wand in his hand. Inside the door was the Deputy-Usher; and outside, the Crier of the Black Rod, whose duty it was to open the sittings of the Courts of Justice, with the cry, "Oyez!" in French, uttered thrice, with a solemn accent upon the first syllable. Near the Crier stood the Serjeant Mace-bearer of the Chancellor.

In royal ceremonies the temporal peers wore coronets on their heads, and the spiritual peers, mitres. The archbishops wore mitres, with a ducal coronet; and the bishops, who rank next after viscounts, mitres, with a baron's coronet.

It is to be remarked, as a coincidence at once strange and instructive, that this square formed by the throne, the bishops, and the barons, with kneeling magistrates within it, was similar in form to the ancient parliament in France under the first two dynasties. The aspect of authority was the same in France as in England. Hincmar, in his treatise, "De Ordinatione Sacri Palatii," described, in 853, the sittings of the House of Lords at Westminster in the eighteenth century. Strange, in-

deed! a description given nine hundred years before the existence of the thing described.

But what is history? An echo of the past in the future; a reflex from the future on the past.

The assemblage of Parliament was obligatory only once in every seven years.

The Lords deliberated in secret, with closed doors. The debates of the Commons were public. Publicity entails diminution of dignity.

The number of the Lords was unlimited. To create lords was the menace of royalty, — a means of government.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the House of Lords contained a large number of members. It has increased very considerably since that period. To dilute the aristocracy is politic. Elizabeth most probably erred in condensing the peerage into sixty-five lords. The less numerous, the more intolerant the peerage. In assemblies, the more numerous the members, the fewer the heads. James II. understood this when he increased the Upper House to a hundred and eighty-eight lords, — a hundred and eighty-six, if we subtract from the peerages the two duchies of royal favourites, Portsmouth and Cleveland. Under Anne, the total number of lords, including bishops, was two hundred and seven. Not counting the Duke of Cumberland, husband of the queen, there were twenty-five dukes, of whom the premier, Norfolk, did not take his seat, being a Catholic, and of whom the junior, Cambridge, the Elector of Hanover, did, although a foreigner. Winchester, styled first and sole Marquis of England, — as Astorga was termed sole Marquis of Spain, — was absent, being a Jacobite; so that there were only five marquises, of whom the premier was Lindsay, and the junior Lothian; seventy-nine earls, of whom Derby was premier, and

Islay junior; nine viscounts, of whom Hereford was premier, and Lonsdale junior; and sixty-two barons, of whom Abergavenny was premier, and Hervey junior. Lord Hervey, the junior baron, was what was called the "Puisne of the House." Derby, of whom Oxford, Shrewsbury, and Kent took precedence, and who was therefore but the fourth under James II., became (under Anne) premier earl. Two chancellor's names had disappeared from the list of barons, — Verulam, under which designation history finds us Bacon; and Wem, under which it finds us Jefferies. Bacon and Jefferies! both names overshadowed, though by different crimes. In 1705, the twenty-six bishops were reduced to twenty-five, the See of Chester being vacant. Among the bishops some were peers of high rank, such as William Talbot, Bishop of Oxford, who was head of the Protestant branch of that family. Others were eminent Doctors, like John Sharp, Archbishop of York, formerly Dean of Norwich; the poet, Thomas Spratt, Bishop of Rochester, an apoplectic old man; and that Bishop of Lincoln who was to die Archbishop of Canterbury, Wake, the adversary of Bossuet.

On important occasions, and when a message from the Crown to the House was expected, the whole of this august assembly — in robes, in wigs, in mitres, or plumes — formed in line, and displayed their rows of heads, in tiers, along the walls of the House, where the storm could be vaguely seen exterminating the Armada, almost as much as to say, "Even the elements are at the service of England."

CHAPTER IV.

THE OLD CHAMBER.

THE whole ceremony of Gwynplaine's investiture, from his entry under the King's Gate to his taking the test oath under the nave window, was enacted in a sort of twilight.

Lord William Cowper had not listened to many details connected with the disfigurement of the young Lord Fermain Clancharlie, considering it beneath his dignity to know whether or not a peer was handsome, or allow an inferior to intrude information of such a nature upon him. We know that a common fellow will take pleasure in saying, "That prince is humpbacked;" therefore, it is abusive to say that a lord is deformed. To the few words dropped on the subject by the queen the Lord Chancellor had contented himself with replying:—

"The face of a peer is in his peerage!"

The affidavits he read and certified enlightened him ultimately, however. Hence the precautions which he took. The face of the new lord, on his entrance into the House, might cause a sensation.

It was necessary to prevent this, so the Lord Chancellor took measures accordingly. It is a fixed idea, and rule of conduct with great personages, to create as little disturbance as possible; consequently he felt the necessity of so ordering matters that the admission of Gwynplaine would take place without any hitch, and like that of any other successor to the peerage.

It was for this reason that the Lord Chancellor directed that the reception of Lord Fermain Clancharlie should take place at the evening sitting. The Chancellor being the door-keeper — "Quodammodo ostiarus," says the Norman charter; "Januarum cancellorumque potestas," says Tertullian — he can officiate outside the room on the threshold; and Lord William Cowper had used his right by carrying out under the nave the formalities of the investiture of Lord Fermain Clancharlie. Moreover, he had appointed the hour for the ceremonies, so that the new peer actually made his entrance into the house before the house had assembled.

For the investiture of a peer on the threshold, and not in the chamber itself, there happened to be a precedent. The first hereditary baron, John de Beauchamp, of Holt Castle, created by patent of Richard II., in 1387, Baron Kidderminster, was thus installed. In renewing this precedent the Lord Chancellor was creating for himself a cause of embarrassment in the future, the inconvenience of which he felt less than two years afterwards on the entrance of Viscount Newhaven into the House of Lords.

Short-sighted as we have already stated him to be, Lord William Cowper scarcely perceived Gwynplaine's disfigurement; while the two sponsors, being old and nearly blind, did not notice it at all.

The Lord Chancellor had chosen them for that very reason.

Moreover, the Lord Chancellor, having seen only the bearing and stature of Gwynplaine, thought him a rather fine-looking man. When the door-keeper opened the folding doors to Gwynplaine there were but few peers in the house; and these few were nearly all old men. In assemblies the old members are the most punctual, just

as towards women they are the most assiduous in their attentions.

On the duke's benches there were but two persons, one white-headed, the other grey, — Thomas Osborne, Duke of Leeds, and Schomberg, son of that Schomberg, German by birth, French by his marshal's baton, and English by his peerage, who was banished by the edict of Nantes, and who, having fought against England as a Frenchman, fought against France as an Englishman. On the benches of the spiritual lords there sat only the archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of England, above; and below, Dr. Simon Patrick, Bishop of Ely, deeply engaged in conversation with Evelyn Pierrepoint, Marquis of Dorchester, who was explaining to him the difference between a gabion considered singly and when used in the parapet of a field-work, and between palisades and fraises, — the former being a row of posts driven into the ground in front of the tents, for the purpose of protecting the camp; the latter, sharp-pointed stakes set up under the wall of a fortress, to prevent the escalade of the besiegers and the desertion of the besieged; and the marquis was explaining further the method of placing fraises in the ditches of redoubts, half of each stake being buried and half exposed. Thomas Thynne, Viscount Weymouth standing under the light of a chandelier, was examining a plan of his architect's for laying out his gardens at Longleat, in Wiltshire, in the Italian style, — as a lawn, broken up into plots, with squares of turf alternating with squares of red and yellow sand, of river shells, and of fine coal dust. On the viscounts' benches was a group of aged peers, Essex, Ossulstone, Peregrine, Osborne, William Zulestein, and the Earl of Rochford, together with a few more youthful ones, of the faction which did not wear wigs, who were gathered round Price Devereux, Viscount Hereford, discussing

the question whether an infusion of Apalachian holly was tea. "Very nearly," said Osborne. — "Quite," said Essex. This discussion was attentively listened to by Paulet St. John, a cousin of Bolingbroke, of whom Voltaire was, later on, in some degree the pupil; for Voltaire's education, commenced by Père Porée, was finished by Bolingbroke. On the marquises' benches, Thomas de Grey, Marquis of Kent, Lord Chamberlain to the queen, was informing Robert Bertie, Marquis of Lindsay, Lord Chamberlain of England, that the first prize in the great English lottery of 1694 had been won by two French refugees, Monsieur le Coq, formerly councillor in the parliament of Paris, and Monsieur Ravenel, a gentleman of Brittany. The Earl of Wemyss was reading a book, entitled "Pratique Curieuse des Oracles des Sybilles." John Campbell, Earl of Greenwich, famous for his long chin, his gaiety, and his eighty-seven years, was writing to his mistress. Lord Chandos was trimming his nails.

The sitting which was about to take place, being a royal one, where the Crown was to be represented by commissioners, two assistant door-keepers were placing in front of the throne a bench covered with purple velvet. On the second wool-sack sat the Master of the Rolls, *sacrorum scriniorum magister* who had then for his residence the house formerly belonging to the converted Jews. Two under-clerks were kneeling, and turning over the leaves of the registers which lay on the fourth wool-sack. In the mean time the Lord Chancellor had taken his place on the first wool-sack. The members of the chamber took theirs, some sitting, others standing; then the Archbishop of Canterbury rose and read the prayer, and the session of the house began.

Gwynplaine had already been there some time without

attracting any notice. The second bench of barons, which was his place, was close to the bar, so that he had had to take but a few steps to reach it. The two peers, his sponsors, sat, one on his right hand, the other on his left; thus almost concealing the new-comer.

No one having been furnished with any previous information, the Clerk of Parliament had read in a low voice, and, as it were, mumbled through the different documents concerning the new peer, and the Lord Chancellor had proclaimed his admission in the midst of what is called, in the reports, "general inattention." Every one was talking. There buzzed through the House that cheerful hum of voices during which assemblies pass things which will not bear the light, and at which they marvel too late, when they find out what they have done.

Gwynplaine was seated in silence, with his head uncovered, between the two old peers, Lord Fitzwalter and Lord Arundel.

Let us add that Barkilphedro, like the wily scoundrel that he was, had, in his official communications to the Lord Chancellor, made light to a certain extent of the disfigurement of Lord Clancharlie, maintaining that Gwynplaine could at will suppress the grin and look serious. Besides, from an aristocratic point of view, what did it matter? Lord Cowper, as a lawyer, had declared, "The restoration of a peer is of more importance than the restoration of a king." It is a shame and an outrage for a lord to be deformed, but how does that affect his rights? The right of being a peer or a king is superior to deformity or infirmity. Was not a wild beasts' cry as hereditary as the peerage in the ancient family of the Comyns Earls of Buchan, extinct in 1347, so that it was by the tiger-yell that the Scotch peer was

recognized? Did his blood-spotted face prevent Cæsar Borgia from being Duke of Valentinois? Did blindness prevent John of Luxembourg being King of Bohemia? Did a humped back prevent Richard III. from being King of England? Viewed aright, infirmity or deformity, accepted with haughty indifference, affirm and confirm grandeur. This is another view of the question, and not the least important. As we have seen, no one could oppose the admission of Gwynplaine, and the prudent precautions of the Lord Chancellor were superfluous from the point of view of aristocratic principle.

On entering, according to the instructions of the King-at-Arms, — afterwards renewed by his sponsors, — he had bowed to the throne.

Thus all was over. He was a peer.

That pinnacle, under the glory of which he had, all his life, seen his master Ursus bow down in fear, — that prodigious pinnacle was now beneath his feet. He was in that place, so dark and yet so dazzling in England. Old peak of the feudal mountain, looked up to for six centuries by Europe and by history!

Terrible nimbus of a world of shadow! He had entered into the brightness of its glory, and his entrance was irrevocable.

He was there in his own sphere, seated on his throne, like the king on his.

He was there, and nothing in the future could obliterate the fact. The royal crown, which he saw under the daïs, was brother to his coronet. He was the peer of that throne.

Yesterday, what was he? A strolling actor. To-day, what was he? A prince.

Yesterday, nothing; to-day, everything.

It was a sudden confrontation of misery and power, meeting face to face, and resolving themselves at once

into the two halves of a conscience. Two spectres, — Adversity and Prosperity, — were taking possession of the same soul, and each drawing that soul towards itself.

Oh, pathetic division of an intellect, of a will, of a brain, between two brothers who are enemies! The Phantom of Poverty and the Phantom of Wealth! Cain and Abel united in the same man!

CHAPTER V.

ARISTOCRATIC GOSSIP.

THE seats of the house filled by degrees as the lords arrived. The question to be discussed was the vote for augmenting, by a hundred thousand pounds sterling, the annual income of George of Denmark, Duke of Cumberland, the queen's husband. Besides this, it was announced that several bills assented to by her Majesty were to be brought back to the House by the Commissioners of the Crown empowered and charged to sanction them. This raised the sitting to a royal one. The peers all wore their robes over their usual court or ordinary dress. These robes, similar to that which had been thrown over Gwynplaine, were alike for all, excepting that the dukes had five bands of ermine, edged with gold; marquises, four; earls and viscounts, three; and barons, two. Most of the lords entered in groups. They had met in the corridors, and were continuing the conversations there begun. A few came in alone. The costumes of all were imposing; but neither their attitudes nor their words corresponded with them. On entering, each one bowed to the throne.

The peers flowed in. The series of great names marched past with scant ceremonial, the public not being present. Leicester entered and shook Lichfield's hand; then came Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough and Monmouth, the friend of Locke, at whose advice he had proposed the recoinage of money; then Charles Campbell, Earl of Loudoun, listening to Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke; then

Dormer, Earl of Caërnarvon; then Robert Sutton, Baron Lexington, son of that Lexington who recommended Charles II. to banish Gregorio Leti, the historiographer, who was so ill-advised as to try to become a historian; then Thomas Bellasys, Viscount Falconburg, a handsome old man; and the three cousins, Howard, Earl of Bindon, Bowes Howard, Earl of Berkshire, and Stafford Howard, Earl of Stafford, — all together; then John Lovelace, the Baron Lovelace, which peerage became extinct in 1736, so that Richardson was enabled to introduce Lovelace in his book, and to create a type under the name. All these personages, — celebrated each in his own way, either in politics or in war, and many of whom were an honour to England, — were laughing and talking.

It was history, as it were, seen in undress.

In less than half an hour the House was nearly full. This was to be expected, as the sitting was a royal one. What was more unusual was the eagerness of the conversations. The House, so sleepy not long before, now hummed like a hive of bees.

The arrival of the peers who had come in late had woke them up. These lords had brought news. It was strange that the peers who had been there at the opening of the session knew nothing of what had occurred, while those who had not been there knew all about it.

Several lords had come from Windsor.

For some hours past the adventures of Gwynplaine had been the subject of conversation. A secret is a net; let one mesh drop, and the whole falls to pieces. That morning, in consequence of the incidents related above, the whole story of a peer found on the stage, and of a mountebank become a lord, had burst forth at Windsor. The princes had talked about it, and then the lackeys. From the court the news soon reached the town. Events have a weight, and the mathematical rule of velocity,

increasing in proportion to the squares of the distance, applies to them. They fall upon the public, and work themselves through it with the most astounding rapidity. At seven o'clock no one in London had caught wind of the story. By eight, Gwynplaine was the talk of the town. Only the lords who had been so punctual that they were present before the assembling of the House were ignorant of the circumstances, not having been in the town when the matter was talked of by every one, and having been in the House, where nothing had been perceived. Seated quietly on their benches, they were addressed by the eager new-comers.

"Well!" said Francis Brown, Viscount Montacute, to the Marquis of Dorchester.

"What?"

"Is it really so?"

"What?"

"Why, about the Laughing Man!"

"Who is the Laughing Man?"

"Don't you know the Laughing Man?"

"No."

"He is a clown, a fellow who has been performing at fairs. He has an extraordinary face, which people gave a penny to look at. A mountebank."

"Well, what then?"

"He has just been installed as a Peer of England."

"You must be the Laughing Man, my Lord Montacute!"

"I am not jesting, my Lord Dorchester."

Lord Montacute made a sign to the Clerk of Parliament, who rose from his wool-sack, and confirmed to their lordships the fact of the admission of the new peer. Moreover, he related the circumstances.

"How wonderful!" said Lord Dorchester. "I was talking to the Bishop of Ely all the while."

The young Earl of Annesley addressing old Lord Eure,

who had but two years more to live, as he died in 1707, asked,—

"My Lord Eure, did you know Lord Linnæus Clancharlie?"

"A man of by-gone days. Yes, I did."

"He died in Switzerland?"

"Yes; we were distantly related."

"He was a republican under Cromwell, and remained a republican under Charles II., did he not?"

"A republican? Not at all! He was only sulking. He had a personal quarrel with the king. I know from good authority that Lord Clancharlie would have returned to his allegiance, if they had given him the office of chancellor, which Lord Hyde held."

"You astonish me, Lord Eure. I heard that Lord Clancharlie was an honest politician."

"An honest politician! Does such a thing exist? Young man, there is no such thing!"

"And Cato?"

"Oh, you believe in Cato, do you?"

"And Aristides?"

"They did well to exile him."

"And Thomas More?"

"They did well to cut off his head."

"And in your opinion, Lord Clancharlie —"

"Was a man of the same stamp. As for a man remaining in exile, why, that is simply ridiculous."

"He died there."

"An ambitious man disappointed. You ask if I knew him? I should think so, indeed. I was his most intimate friend."

"Were you aware, Lord Eure, that he married while in Switzerland?"

"I am pretty sure of it."

"And that he had a lawful heir by that marriage?"

"Yes; who is dead."

"Who is living."

"Living?"

"Living."

"Impossible!"

"It is a fact, — proved, authenticated, confirmed, registered."

"Then that son will inherit the Clancharlie peerage?"

"He is not going to inherit it."

"Why?"

"Because he has inherited it already. It is an accomplished fact."

"Done?"

"Turn your head, Lord Eure; he is sitting behind you, on the barons' benches."

Lord Eure turned, but Gwynplaine's face was concealed under his forest of hair.

"So he has already adopted the new fashion," said the old man, who could see nothing but his hair. "He does not wear a wig."

Grantham accosted Colepepper.

"Some one is finely sold."

"Who is that?"

"David Dirry-Moir."

"How is that?"

"He is no longer a peer."

"How can that be?"

And Henry Auverquerque, Earl of Grantham, proceeded to tell John Baron Colepepper the whole story about the flask which had been carried to the Admiralty, about the confession of the Comprachicos, the *Jussu regis*, countersigned *Jefferies*, and the confrontation in the torture-cell at Southwark, the proofs of all the facts acknowledged by the Lord Chancellor and by the queen; the taking of the oath under the nave, and finally the

admission of Lord Fermain Clancharlie at the commencement of the sitting. Both the lords endeavoured to distinguish his face as he sat between Lord Fitzwalter and Lord Arundel, but with no better success than Lord Eure and Lord Annesley.

Gwynplaine, either by chance or by the arrangement of his sponsors, forewarned by the Lord Chancellor, was so placed in shadow as to escape their curiosity.

"Who is it? Where is he?"

Such was the exclamation of all the new-comers, but no one succeeded in making him out distinctly. Some, who had seen Gwynplaine in the Green Box, were exceedingly curious, but without avail. As it sometimes happens that a young lady is intrenched within a troop of dowagers, Gwynplaine was, as it were, enveloped in several layers of lords, old, infirm, and indifferent. Good livers, with the gout, are marvellously indifferent to stories about their neighbours.

There passed, from hand to hand, copies of a letter three lines in length, written, it was said, by the Duchess Josiana to the queen, her sister, in answer to the command given by her Majesty, that she should espouse the new peer, the lawful heir of the Clancharlies, Lord Fermain. This letter was couched in the following terms: —

MADAM, — The arrangement will suit me just as well. I can have Lord David for my lover.

(Signed) JOSIANA.

This note, whether a true copy or a forgery, was received by all with the greatest enthusiasm. A young lord, Charles Okehampton, Baron Mohun, who belonged to the wigless faction, read and re-read it with delight. Lewis Duras, Earl of Faversham, an Englishman with a Frenchman's wit, looked at Mohun and smiled.

"That is a woman I should like to marry!" exclaimed Lord Mohun.

The lords around them overheard the following dialogue between Duras and Mohun.

"Marry the Duchess Josiana, Lord Mohun!"

"Why not? She would make one very happy!"

"She would make many very happy, you mean?"

"But is it not always a question of many?"

"Lord Mohun, you are right. With regard to women, we have always the leavings of others. Has any one ever had a beginning?"

"Adam, perhaps."

"Not he."

"Then Satan."

"My dear lord," concluded Lewis Duras, "Adam only lent his name. Poor dupe! He endorsed the human race. Man was begotten of woman by the devil."

Hugh Cholmondeley, Earl of Cholmondeley, strong in points of law, was asked from the bishops' benches by Nathaniel Crew, who was doubly a peer, being a temporal peer, as Baron Crew, and a spiritual peer, as Bishop of Durham.

"Is it possible?" said Crew.

"Is it regular?" said Cholmondeley.

"The investiture of this peer was made outside the House," replied the bishop; "but it is stated that there are precedents for it."

"Yes. Lord Beauchamp, under Richard II.; Lord Chenay, under Elizabeth."

"Lord Broghill, under Cromwell."

"Cromwell goes for nothing."

"What do you think of it all?"

"Many different things."

"My Lord Cholmondeley, what will be the rank of this young Lord Clancharlie in the House?"

"My Lord Bishop, the interruption of the Republic having displaced ancient rights of precedence, Clancharlie now ranks in the peerage between Barnard and Somers, so that should each be called upon to speak in turn, Lord Clancharlie would be the eighth in rotation."

"Really! he, a mountebank from a public show!"

"The act, *per se*, does not astonish me, my Lord Bishop. We meet with such things. Still more wonderful circumstances occur. Was not the War of the Roses predicted by the sudden drying up of the river Ouse, in Bedfordshire, on January 1, 1399. Now, if a river dries up, a peer may, quite as naturally, fall into a servile condition. Ulysses, King of Ithaca, played all kinds of rôles. Fermain Clancharlie remained a lord under his player's garb. Sordid garments do not mar the soul's nobility. But taking the test and the investiture outside the sitting, though strictly legal, might give rise to objections. I am of opinion that it will be necessary to look into the matter, to see if there be any ground to question the Lord Chancellor in Privy Council, later on. We shall see in a week or two what is best to be done."

And the Bishop added, —

"All the same. It is an adventure such as has not occurred since Earl Gesbodus's time."

Gwynplaine, the Laughing Man; the Tadcaster Inn; the Green Box; "Chaos Vanquished;" Switzerland; Chillon; the Comprachicos; exile; mutilation; the Republic; Jefferies; James II.; the *jussu regis;* the bottle opened at the Admiralty; the father, Lord Linnæus; the legitimate son, Lord Fermain; the illegitimate son, Lord David; the probable law suits; the Duchess Josiana; the Lord Chancellor; the queen, — all these topics of conversation ran from bench to bench.

Whispering is like a train of gunpowder.

They seized on every incident. The details of the occurrence caused an excited murmur through the house. Gwynplaine, absorbed in reverie, heard the buzzing without knowing that he was the cause of it. He was strangely attentive to the depths, not to the surface. Excessive attention produces isolation.

The buzz of conversation in the House impedes the progress of business no more than the dust raised by a troop impedes its march. The judges — who in the Upper House were mere assistants, without the privilege of speaking, except when questioned — had taken their places on the second wool-sack; and the three Secretaries of State theirs, on the third.

The heirs to peerages flowed into their compartment, at once without and within the House, at the back of the throne.

The peers, who were still minors, were on their own benches. In 1705 the number of these lords amounted to no less than a dozen, — Huntingdon, Lincoln, Dorset, Warwick, Bath, Barlington, Derwentwater (destined to a tragical death), Longueville, Lonsdale, Dudley, Ward, and Carteret: a party of youths consisting of eight earls, two viscounts, and two barons.

Each lord had taken his seat on the three stages of benches in the centre. Almost all the bishops were there. The dukes mustered strong, beginning with Charles Seymour, Duke of Somerset, and ending with George Augustus, Elector of Hanover, and Duke of Cambridge, junior in date of creation, and consequently junior in rank. All were seated in order, according to right of precedence: Cavendish, Duke of Devonshire, whose grandfather had sheltered Hobbs, at Hardwicke, when he was ninety-two; Lenox, Duke of Richmond; the three Fitzroys, the Duke of Southampton, the Duke

of Grafton, and the Duke of Northumberland; Butler, Duke of Ormond; Somerset, Duke of Beaufort; Beauclerc, Duke of St. Albans; Paulet, Duke of Bolton; Osborne, Duke of Leeds; Wrottesley Russell, Duke of Bedford, — whose motto and device was *che sara sara*, which expresses a determination to take things as they come; Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham; Manners, Duke of Rutland; and others. Neither Howard, Duke of Norfolk, nor Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury, were present, being Catholics; nor Churchill, Duke of Marlborough (the French Malbrouck), who was at that time fighting the French and beating them. There were no Scotch dukes then, — Queensberry, Montrose, and Roxburgh not being admitted till 1707.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HIGH AND THE LOW.

ALL at once a bright light illumined the House. Four door-keepers brought in and placed on each side of the throne four high candelabra filled with wax-lights. The throne, thus illuminated, shone in a kind of purple light. It was empty, but august. The presence of the queen herself could not have added much majesty to it.

The Usher of the Black Rod entered with his wand, and announced: —

"The Lords Commissioners of her Majesty."

The hum of conversation immediately subsided.

A clerk, in a wig and gown, appeared at the great door, holding a velvet cushion embroidered with *fleurs-de-lis*, on which lay several rolls of parchment. These were bills. From each hung by a silken string the *bille*, or *bulle*, from which laws are called bills in England, and bulls in Rome. Behind the clerk walked three men in peers' robes, and wearing plumed hats.

These were the Royal Commissioners. The first was the Lord High Treasurer of England, Godolphin; the second, the Lord President of the Council, Pembroke; the third, the Lord of the Privy Seal, Newcastle.

They walked one by one according to precedence, not of their rank, but of their creation, — Godolphin first, Newcastle last, although a duke.

On reaching the bench in front of the throne, to which they bowed, removing and replacing their hats, they sat down on the bench.

The Lord Chancellor turned towards the Usher of the Black Rod, and said, —

"Summon the Commons to the bar of the House."

The Usher of the Black Rod retired.

The Clerk, who was one of the clerks of the House of Lords, placed on the table, between the four wool-sacks, the cushion on which the bills rested.

Then came a pause, which continued several minutes. Two door-keepers placed before the bar a stool, with three steps. This stool was covered with crimson velvet, on which *fleurs-de-lis* were designed in gilt nails.

The great door, which had been closed, was re-opened; and a voice announced, —

"The faithful Commons of England."

It was the Usher of the Black Rod announcing the other half of Parliament.

The Lords put on their hats.

The members of the House of Commons entered, preceded by their Speaker, all with uncovered heads.

They stopped at the bar. They were in their ordinary garb; for the most part dressed in black and wearing swords.

The Speaker, the Right Honourable John Smith, an esquire, member for the borough of Andover, got up on the stool which was at the centre of the bar. The Speaker of the House of Commons wore a robe of black satin, with large hanging sleeves, embroidered before and behind with brandenburgs of gold, and a wig smaller than that of the Lord Chancellor. He was majestic, but inferior.

The Commons, both Speaker and members, stood waiting with uncovered heads, before the peers, who remained seated, with their hats on.

Among the members of Commons might have been noticed the Chief Justice of Chester, Joseph Jekyll; the

queen's three Serjeants-at-Law, — Hooper, Powys, and Parker; James Montagu, Solicitor-General; and the Attorney-General, Simon Harcourt. With the exception of a few baronets and knights, and nine lords by courtesy, — Hartington, Windsor, Woodstock, Mordaunt, Granby, Scudamore, Fitzhardinge, Hyde, and Berkeley (sons of peers and heirs to peerages), — all were of the people; a sort of gloomy and silent crowd.

When the noise made by the trampling of feet had ceased, the Crier of the Black Rod, standing by the door, exclaimed, —

"Oyez!"

The Clerk of the Crown arose. He took, unfolded, and read the first of the documents on the cushion. It was a message from the queen, naming three commissioners to represent her in Parliament, with power to sanction bills presented for consideration.

"To wit: —"

Here the Clerk raised his voice.

"Sidney Earl Godolphin."

The Clerk bowed to Lord Godolphin. Lord Godolphin raised his hat.

The Clerk continued: —

"Thomas Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery."

The Clerk bowed to Lord Pembroke. Lord Pembroke touched his hat.

The Clerk resumed: —

"John Holles, Duke of Newcastle."

The Duke of Newcastle nodded.

The Clerk of the Crown resumed his seat.

The Clerk of Parliament arose. His under-clerk, who had been on his knees behind him, got up also. Both turned their faces to the throne, and their backs to the Commons.

There were five bills on the cushion. These five bills,

voted by the Commons and agreed to by the Lords, awaited the royal sanction.

The Clerk of the Parliaments read the first bill.

It was a bill passed by the Commons, charging the country with the costs of the improvements made by the queen to her residence at Hampton Court, amounting to a million sterling.

The reading over, the Clerk bowed low to the throne. The under-clerk bowed lower still; then, half turning his head towards the Commons, he said, —

"The queen accepts your benevolence, — *et ainsi le veut.*"

The Clerk read the second bill.

It was a law condemning to imprisonment and fine whomsoever withdrew himself from the service of the train-bands. The train-bands were a militia, recruited from the middle and lower classes, serving gratis, which in Elizabeth's reign furnished, on the approach of the Armada, one hundred and eighty-five thousand foot-soldiers and forty thousand horse.

The two clerks made a fresh bow to the throne, after which the under-clerk, again half turning his face to the Commons, said, —

"La Reine le veut."

The third bill was for increasing the tithes and prebends of the Bishopric of Lichfield and Coventry, which was one of the richest in England; for making an increased yearly allowance to the cathedral, for augmenting the number of its canons, and for increasing its deaneries and benefices, "to the benefit of our holy religion," as the preamble set forth.

The fourth bill added to the budget fresh taxes, — one on marbled paper; one on hackney coaches, fixed at the number of eight hundred in London, each taxed at a sum equal to fifty-two francs yearly; one on barristers, attor-

neys, and solicitors, at forty-eight francs a year per head; one on tanned skins, notwithstanding, said the preamble, the complaints of the workers in leather. One on soap, notwithstanding the petitions of the City of Exeter and of the whole of Devonshire, where great quantities of cloth and serge were manufactured; one on wine at four shillings; one on flour; one on barley and hops; and one renewing for four years "the necessities of the State," said the preamble, "demanding attention in spite of the remonstrances of commerce;" and tonnage-dues, varying from six francs per ton, for ships coming from the westward, to eighteen francs on those coming from the eastward. Finally, the bill, declaring the sums already levied for the current year insufficient, concluded by decreeing a poll-tax on each subject throughout the kingdom of four shillings per head, adding that a double tax would be levied on every person who endeavoured to evade the demands of the Government.

The fifth bill forbade the admission into the hospital of any sick person who on entering did not deposit a pound sterling to pay his funeral expenses in case of death. These last three bills, like the first two, were sanctioned one after another, and made law by a bow to the throne, and the four words pronounced by the under-clerk, "la Reine le veut," spoken over his shoulder to the Commons. Then the under-clerk knelt down again before the fourth wool-sack, and the Lord Chancellor said, —

"Soit fait comme il est désiré."

This terminated the royal sitting. The Speaker, bending nearly double before the Chancellor, descended from the stool, backwards, lifting up his robe behind him; the members of the House of Commons bowed to the ground, and as the Upper House resumed the business of the day, heedless of all these marks of respect, the Commons departed.

CHAPTER VII.

STORMS OF MEN ARE WORSE THAN STORMS OF OCEANS.

THE doors having closed again, the Usher of the Black Rod re-entered; the Lords Commissioners left the bench of State and took their places at the top of the dukes' benches, by right of their commission, and the Lord Chancellor addressed the House.

"My lords, the House having deliberated for several days on the Bill which proposes to augment, by £100,000 sterling the annual provision for his Royal Highness the Prince, her Majesty's Consort, and the debate having been closed, the House will now proceed to vote; the votes will be taken according to custom, beginning with the puisne baron. Each lord, on his name being called, will rise and answer "content," or "not content," and will be at liberty to explain his reasons for his vote, if he thinks fit to do so. Clerk, take the vote."

The Clerk of the House, standing up, opened a large folio, and spread it open on a gilded desk. This book was the list of the Peerage.

The puisne of the House of Lords at that time, was John Hervey, created Baron and Peer in 1703, from whom is descended the Marquis of Bristol.

The Clerk called, —

"My Lord John, Baron Hervey."

An old man in a fair wig arose, and said, "Content."

Then he sat down.

The Clerk registered his vote.

The Clerk continued, —

"My Lord Francis Seymour, Baron Conway, of Killultagh."

"Content," murmured, half rising, an elegant young man, with a face like a page, who little thought that he was to be the ancestor of the Marquises of Hertford.

"My Lord John Leveson, Baron Gower," continued the Clerk.

This baron, from whom the Dukes of Sutherland were to spring, rose, and, as he reseated himself, said, "Content."

"My Lord Heneage Finch, Baron Guernsey," continued the Clerk.

The ancestor of the Earls of Aylesford, neither older nor less elegant than the ancestor of the Marquises of Hertford, justified his device, *aperto vivere voto*, by the proud tone in which he exclaimed, "Content."

While he was resuming his seat, the Clerk called the fifth Baron.

"My Lord John, Baron Granville."

Rising and resuming his seat quickly, "Content," exclaimed Lord Granville, of Potheridge, whose peerage was to become extinct in 1709.

The Clerk passed to the sixth.

"My Lord Charles Montague, Baron Halifax."

"Content," said Lord Halifax, the bearer of a title which had become extinct with the Saville family, and was destined to become extinct again in that of Montague. (Montague is distinct from Montagu and Montacute.) And Lord Halifax added, "Prince George has an allowance as her Majesty's Consort; he has another as Prince of Denmark; another as Duke of Cumberland; another as Lord High-Admiral of England and Ireland; but he has none as Commander-in-Chief. This is an

injustice and a wrong which must be set right, in the interest of the English people."

Then Lord Halifax proceeded to utter an eulogium on the Christian religion, abused popery, and voted the subsidy.

Lord Halifax sat down, and the Clerk resumed: —

"My Lord Christopher, Baron Barnard."

Lord Barnard, from whom were to descend the Dukes of Cleveland, rose to answer to his name.

"Content."

He took some time in reseating himself, for he wore a lace band which was well worth showing. For all that, Lord Barnard was a worthy gentleman and a brave officer.

While Lord Barnard was resuming his seat, the Clerk, who read by routine, hesitated for an instant; he re-adjusted his spectacles, and leaned over the register with renewed attention; then, lifting up his head, he said:

"My Lord Fermain Clancharlie, Baron Clancharlie and Hunkerville."

Gwynplaine arose.

"Not content," said he.

Every face was turned towards him. Gwynplaine remained standing. The candelabra placed on each side of the throne lighted up his features, bringing them out into the same bold relief against the darkness of the chamber that a mask would show against a background of dense smoke.

Gwynplaine had made that effort over himself which, it may be remembered, was possible to him in extremity. By a concentration of will equal to that which would be needed to subdue a tiger, he had succeeded in obliterating the fatal grin upon his face for a moment. For an instant he ceased to laugh. This effort could not last long. Rebellion against that which is our law or

our fatality, must be short-lived; at times the waters of the sea resist the power of gravitation, swell into a water-spout and become a mountain, but only on condition of speedily receding again.

Such a struggle was Gwynplaine's. For one instant, which he felt to be a solemn one, by a prodigious intensity of will, but for not much longer than the duration of a flash of lightning, he cast the dark veil of his soul over his brow, and held his incurable laugh in abeyance. He had withdrawn the mirth from that face upon which it had been carved, and the effect was terrible.

"Who is this man?" exclaimed everybody.

Those bristling masses of hair; those dark hollows under the brows; the deep gaze of eyes which they could not see; that head, in the wild outlines of which light and darkness so weirdly mingled, — were marvellous indeed. It was beyond all understanding; much as they had heard of him, the sight of Gwynplaine was a terror. Even those who had expected to behold a monstrosity found their expectations greatly surpassed. It was as if during a banquet on a serene evening upon the mountain reserved for the gods, the face of Prometheus, mangled by the vulture's beak, should have suddenly appeared before them, like a blood-tinged moon on the horizon. Olympus gazing on Caucasus! What a vision! Old and young, open-mouthed with astonishment, fixed their eyes upon Gwynplaine.

An old man, respected by the whole House, who had seen many men and many things, and who was destined for a dukedom, — Thomas, Earl of Wharton, — rose in terror.

"What does this mean?" he cried. "Who brought this man into the House? Let him be put out."

Then addressing Gwynplaine, haughtily: —

LORD CLANCHARLIE'S SPEECH.

"Who are you? Whence do you come?"

Gwynplaine answered, —

"Out of the depths."

And folding his arms, he looked at the lords.

"Who am I? I am wretchedness. My lords, I have a word to say to you."

A shudder ran through the House. Then all was silent.

"My lords, you are highly placed," Gwynplaine continued. "It is well. We must believe that God has his reasons that it should be so. You have power, opulence, pleasure, the sun ever shining in your zenith, authority unbounded, enjoyment without a sting, and a total forgetfulness of others. So be it. But there is something below you — above you, may be. My lords, I bring you news, — news of the existence of mankind."

Assemblies are like children. A strange occurrence is like a Jack-in-the-box to them. It frightens them; but they like it. It is as if a spring were touched, and the devil jumps up. Mirabeau, who was also deformed, was a case in point in France.

Gwynplaine felt within himself, at that moment, a strange elevation of soul. In addressing a body of men, one's foot seems to rest on them; to rest, as it were, on a pinnacle of souls, on human hearts, that quiver under one's heel. Gwynplaine was no longer the man who had been almost contemptible only the night before. The fumes of the sudden elevation which had disturbed him, had cleared off and become transparent, and in the lofty rank which had so excited his vanity at first, he now saw only a duty. That which had at first degraded, now elevated, him. He was illuminated by one of those dazzling flashes which emanate from duty.

All round Gwynplaine arose cries of "Hear, hear!"

Meanwhile, he had succeeded in retaining on his

features that severe and sad contraction under which the laugh was fretting like a wild horse struggling to escape.

He resumed: —

"I am one who has come up out of the depths. My lords, you are rich and powerful. Therein lies your danger. You profit by the night; but beware! The Dawn is all-powerful. You cannot prevail over that. It is coming. Nay! it is already come. Within it is the day-spring of irresistible light. And who shall hinder that sling from hurling the sun into the sky? The sun I speak of is Right. You are Privilege. Tremble! The real master of the house is about to knock at the door. What is the father of Privilege? Chance. What is his son? Abuse. Neither Chance nor Abuse are abiding. For both, a dark morrow is at hand! I am come to warn you. I am come to impeach your happiness. It is fashioned out of the misery of your neighbour. You have everything, and that everything is composed of the little of others. My lords, I am an advocate without hope, pleading a cause that is lost; but that cause God will gain on appeal. As for me, I am but a voice. Mankind is a mouth, of which I am the cry. You shall hear me! I am about to open before you, peers of England, the great assize of the people, — of that sovereign who is the subject; of that criminal who is the judge. I am weighed down by the burden of all I have to say. Where am I to begin? I know not. I have gathered together, in the vast diffusion of suffering, my innumerable and scattered pleas. What am I to do with them now? They overwhelm me, and I must cast them before you in a confused mass. Did I foresee this? No. You are astonished. So I am. Yesterday, I was a strolling player. To-day, I am a peer. Mysterious ruling! Of whom? Of the great Unknown.

Let us all tremble. My lords, all the blue sky is for you. Of this immense universe you see only the sunshine. Believe me, it has its shadows. Among you I am called Lord Fermain Clancharlie; but my true name is one of poverty, — Gwynplaine. I am a wretched thing carved out of the stuff of which the great are made, for such was the pleasure of a king. That is my history. Many among you knew my father. I knew him not. His connection with you was his noble descent; his outlawry is the bond between him and me. What God willed was well. I was cast into the abyss. For what end? To search its depths. I am a diver, and I have brought back the pearl of truth. I speak, because I know. You shall hear me, my lords. I have seen, I have felt! Suffering is not a mere word, ye happy ones! I grew up in poverty; winter has frozen me; I have known hunger; I have suffered contempt; I have undergone pestilence; I have drunk of shame. And I will vomit all these up before you, and this ejection of misery shall sully your feet and flame about them. I hesitated before I allowed myself to be brought to the place where I now stand, because I owed duties to others elsewhere, and my heart is not here. What passed within me has nothing to do with you. When the man whom you call Usher of the Black Rod came to seek me by order of the woman whom you call the queen, the idea struck me for a moment that I would refuse to come. But it seemed to me that the hidden hand of God pressed me to the spot, and I obeyed. I felt that I must come among you. Why? Because of my rags of yesterday. It is to raise my voice among those who have eaten their fill that God reared me with the famished. Oh, have pity! Of this fatal world to which you believe yourselves to belong, you know nothing. Placed so high, you are out of it. But I will tell you what it is; I have

had experience enough. I come from beneath the pressure of your feet. I can tell you your weight. O you who are masters, do you know what you are? Do you realize what you are doing? No. Oh, it is dreadful! One night, a night of tempest, a little deserted child, an orphan alone in the immeasurable creation, I made my entrance into that darkness which you call society. The first thing that I saw was the law, in the form of a gibbet; the second was riches, your riches, in the form of a woman dead of cold and hunger; the third, the future, in the form of a child left to die; the fourth, goodness, truth, and justice, in the form of a vagabond, whose only friend and companion was a wolf."

Just then, Gwynplaine, stricken by a sudden emotion, felt the sobs rising in his throat, causing him unfortunately to burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

The contagion was immediate. A cloud had hung over the assemblage. It might have broken into terror; it broke into delight. Wild merriment seized the entire House. Nothing pleases the great assemblies of sovereign man so much as buffoonery. It is their revenge upon their graver moments.

The laughter of kings is like the laughter of the gods. There is always a cruel sting in it. The lords set to play. Sneers gave sting to their laughter. They clapped their hands around the speaker, and insulted him. A volley of gay exclamations assailed him like bright but wounding hailstones.

"Bravo, Gwynplaine!" — "Bravo, Laughing Man!" — "Bravo, Snout of the Green Box!" — "Mask of Tarrinzeau Field!" — "You are going to give us a performance!" — "That 's right; talk away!" — "There 's a funny fellow!" — "How the beast does laugh, to be sure!" — "Good-day, pantaloon!" — "How d' ye do, my lord clown!" — "Go on with your speech!" — "That fellow a

Peer of England!" — "Go on!" — "No, no!" — "Yes, yes!"

The Lord Chancellor was much disturbed.

A deaf peer, James Butler, Duke of Ormond, placing his hand to his ear like an ear-trumpet, asked Charles Beauclerk, Duke of Saint Albans: —

"How has he voted?"

"Not content."

"By heavens!" said Ormond, "I can understand that, with such a face as his!"

Do you think that you can ever recapture a crowd once it has escaped your grasp? No, eloquence is a bit; if the bit breaks, the audience runs away, and rushes on till it has thrown the orator. Hearers naturally dislike the speaker, which is a fact not as clearly understood as it ought to be. Instinctively he pulls hard on the reins, but that is a useless expedient. However, all orators try it, as Gwynplaine did.

He looked for a moment at these men who were laughing at him. Then he cried: —

"So, you insult misery! Silence, Peers of England! Judges, listen to my pleading! Oh, I conjure you, have pity. Pity for whom? Pity for yourselves. Who is in danger? Yourselves! Do you not see that you are in a balance, and that your power is in one scale, and your responsibility in the other? It is God who is weighing you. Oh, do not laugh. Think. The trembling of your consciences is the oscillation of the balance in which God is weighing your actions. You are not wicked; you are like other men, — neither better nor worse. You believe yourselves to be gods, but be ill tomorrow, and see your divinity shivering in fever! We are worth one as much as the other. I address myself to honest men; there are such here. I address myself to lofty intellects; there are such here. I address my-

self to generous souls; there are such here. You are fathers, sons, and brothers; therefore your hearts are often touched. He among you who has this morning watched the waking of his little child, is a good man. All hearts are alike. Humanity is nothing but a heart. Between those who oppress and those who are oppressed, there is only a difference of rank. Your feet tread on the heads of men. The fault is not yours; it is that of the social Babel. The building is faulty, and out of the perpendicular. One floor bears down the other. Listen, and I will tell you what to do. Oh, as you are powerful, be brotherly! As you are great, be tender. If you only knew what I have seen! Alas! What gloom there is beneath you! The people are in a dungeon. How many are condemned who are innocent! No daylight, no air, no virtue! They are without hope; and yet — there is the danger! — they expect something Realize all this misery. There are beings who live in death. There are little girls who at twelve begin by prostitution, and who end in old age at twenty. As to the severities of the criminal code, they are fearful. I speak somewhat at random, and cannot choose my words. I say everything that comes into my head. No later than yesterday, I, who stand here, saw a man lying in chains, naked, with stones piled on his chest, expire in torture. Do you know of these things? No. If you knew what goes on, you would not dare to be happy. Who of you have been to Newcastle-upon-Tyne? There, in the mines, are men who chew coals to fill their stomachs and cheat hunger. Look here! in Lancashire, Ribblechester has sunk, by poverty, from a town to a village. I do not see that Prince George of Denmark requires a hundred thousand pounds extra. I should prefer receiving a poor sick man into the hospital without compelling him to pay his funeral expenses in

advance. In Caërnarvon, and at Strathmore, as well as at Strathbickan, the sufferings of the poor are horrible. At Strafford, they cannot drain the marsh for want of money. The manufactories are shut up all over Lancashire. There is enforced idleness everywhere. Do you know that the herring fishers in Harlech eat grass when the fishery fails? Do you know that in Burton-Lazars there are still lepers confined, on whom they fire if they leave their tan houses? In Ailesbury, a town of which one of you is lord, destitution is chronic. At Penkridge, in Coventry, where you have just endowed a cathedral and enriched a bishop, there are no beds in the cabins, and they dig holes in the earth, in which to put the little children to sleep, so that instead of beginning life in the cradle, they begin it in the grave. I have seen these things. My lords, do you know who pays the taxes you assess? The dying! Alas! you deceive yourselves. You are going the wrong road. You augment the poverty of the poor to increase the riches of the rich. You should do the reverse. What! take from the worker to give to the idle; take from the tattered to give to the well-clad; take from the beggar to give to the prince! Oh, yes, I have old republican blood in my veins. I have a horror of these things. How I execrate kings! And how shameless are the women! I have been told a sad story. How I hate Charles II. A woman whom my father loved, gave herself to that king while my father was dying in exile. The prostitute! Charles II.! James II.! After a scamp, a scoundrel! What is there in a king? A man, feeble and contemptible, subject to wants and infirmities. Of what good is a king? You cultivate that parasite, royalty; you make a serpent of the worm, a dragon of the insect. Oh, pity the poor! You increase the weight of the taxes for the profit of the throne. Look to the laws

which you decree. Take heed of the suffering swarms which you crush. Cast your eyes down. Look at what is beneath your feet. O ye great, there are the little. Have pity! yes, have pity on yourselves; for the nation is in agony, and when the lower part of the trunk dies, the upper part dies too. Death spares no limb. When night comes no one can keep his corner of daylight. Are you selfish? Then save others. The destruction of the vessel cannot be a matter of indifference to any passenger. There can be no wreck for some that is not wreck for all. Oh, believe me, the abyss is yawning for all!"

The laughter increased and became irresistible.

For that matter, a little extravagance of expression suffices to amuse any assembly. To be grotesque without and tragic within, what suffering can be more humiliating? What pain deeper? Gwynplaine felt it. His words were an appeal in one direction, his face in the other. What a terrible position was his!

Suddenly, his voice rang out in strident bursts.

"How gay these men are! Be it so. Here is irony face to face with agony; a sneer mocking the death-rattle. They are all-powerful. Perhaps so. We shall see. Behold! I am one of them; but I am also one of you, O ye fools. A king sold me. A poor man sheltered me. Who mutilated me? A prince. Who healed and nourished me? A pauper. I am Lord Clancharlie; but I am still Gwynplaine. I take my place among the great; but I belong to the mean. I am among those who rejoice; but I belong to those who suffer. Oh, this whole system of society is false! Some day that which is true will come. Then there will be no more lords; and there shall be free and living men. There will be no more masters; there will be fathers. Such is the future. No more prostration; no more baseness; no more igno-

rance; no more human beasts of burden; no more courtiers; no more toadies; no more kings; but Light! In the mean time, see me here. I have a right, and I will use it. Is it a right? No, if I use it for myself; yes, if I use it for the benefit of all. I will be heard, my lords, being one of you. O my brothers below, I will tell them of your nakedness. I will rise up with a bundle of the people's rags in my hand. I will remind the masters of the misery of the slaves; and these favoured and arrogant ones shall no longer be able to escape the remembrance of the wretched, nor the princes the sufferings of the poor; and so much the worse, if it be the bite of vermin; and so much the better if it arouse the lions from their slumber."

Here Gwynplaine turned towards the kneeling underclerks, who were writing on the fourth wool-sack.

"Who are those fellows kneeling down? What are you doing? Get up; you are men."

These words, suddenly addressed to inferiors of whose existence a lord ought not to be even conscious, increased the merriment to the utmost.

They had cried, "Bravo!" Now they shouted, "Hurrah!" From clapping their hands, they proceeded to stamping their feet. One might have been back in the Green Box, only that there the laughter was applause, here it was ridicule. The object of ridicule is to kill. Men's laughter sometimes exerts all its power to murder.

The laughter changed to action. Sneering words were rained upon him. Humour is the folly of assemblies. Their ingenious and foolish ridicule shuns facts instead of studying them, and ignores questions instead of solving them. Any extraordinary occurrence is a point of interrogation; to laugh at it is like laughing at an enigma. But the Sphinx, which never laughs, is behind it.

Conflicting shouts of "Enough! enough!—Encore! encore!" arose.

William Farmer, Baron Leimpster, flung at Gwynplaine the insult cast by Ryc Quiney at Shakspeare:

"'Histrio mima!'"

Lord Vaughan, a sententious man, twenty-ninth on the barons' bench, exclaimed:—

"We must be back in the days when animals had the gift of speech. In the midst of human tongues the jaw of a beast has spoken."

"Listen to Balaam's ass," added Lord Yarmouth.

Lord Yarmouth presented that appearance of sagacity produced by a round nose and a crooked mouth.

"The rebel Linnæus is chastised in his tomb. The son is the punishment of the father," said John Hough, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, at whose prebendary Gwynplaine's attack had glanced.

"He lies!" said Lord Cholmondeley, the legislator so well read up in the law. "What he calls torture is only the *peine forte et dure*, and a very good thing, too. Torture is not practised in England."

Thomas Wentworth, Baron Raby, addressed the Chancellor:—

"My Lord Chancellor, adjourn the House."

"No, no. Let him go on. He is amusing. Hurrah! hip! hip! hurrah!"

Thus shouted the young lords, their mirth amounting to positive frenzy. Four of them were especially hilarious. These were Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester; Thomas Tufton, Earl of Thanet; Viscount Hutton; and the Duke of Montagu.

"Go on with your tricks, Gwynplaine!" cried Rochester.

"Put him out, put him out!" shouted Thanet.

Viscount Hatton drew from his pocket a penny, which he flung to Gwynplaine.

And John Campbell, Earl of Greenwich; Savage, Earl Rivers; Thompson, Baron Haversham; Warrington, Escrick, Rolleston, Rockingham, Carteret, Langdale, Barcester, Maynard, Hunsdon, Caërnarvon, Cavendish, Burlington, Robert Darcy, Earl of Holderness, Otho Windsor, Earl of Plymouth, applauded.

There was a tumult as of pandemonium, in which the words of Gwynplaine were lost.

Amid it all, but one word of Gwynplaine's was audible: "Beware!"

Ralph, Duke of Montagu, recently down from Oxford, and still a beardless youth, descended from the bench of dukes, where he sat the nineteenth in order, and placed himself in front of Gwynplaine, with his arms folded. In a sword there is a spot which cuts sharpest, and in a voice an accent which insults most keenly. Montagu spoke with that accent, and sneering with his face close to that of Gwynplaine, shouted, —

"What are you talking about?"

"I am prophesying," said Gwynplaine.

The laughter exploded anew; and below this laughter, anger growled a continuous bass. One of the minors, Lionel Cranfield Sackville, Earl of Dorset and Middlesex, stood up on his seat, not smiling, but grave as became a future legislator, and, without saying a word, looked at Gwynplaine with his fresh twelve-year-old face, and shrugged his shoulders. Whereat the Bishop of St. Asaph's whispered in the ear of the Bishop of St. David's, who was sitting beside him, as he pointed to Gwynplaine, "There is the fool;" then pointing to the child, "there is the sage."

A chorus of complaint was heard amid the general confusion.

"Gorgon face!" — "What does it all mean?" — "An insult to the House!" — "The fellow ought to be put

out!" — "What a madman!" — "Shame! shame!" — "Adjourn the House!" — "No; let him finish his speech!" — "Talk away, you buffoon!"

Lord Lewis Duras, with his arms a-kimbo, shouted: "Ah! it does one good to laugh. My spleen is cured. I propose a vote of thanks in these terms: 'The House of Lords returns thanks to the Green Box.'"

Gwynplaine, it may be remembered, had dreamt of a different welcome.

A man who, climbing up a steep and crumbling acclivity above a giddy precipice, has felt it giving way under his hands, his nails, his elbows, his knees, his feet; who — losing instead of gaining on his treacherous way, a prey to every terror, slipping back instead of ascending, increasing the certainty of his fall by his very efforts to gain the summit, and losing ground in every struggle for safety — has felt the abyss approaching nearer and nearer, until the certainty of his fall into the yawning jaws, open to receive him, has frozen the marrow of his bones; — that man has experienced the sensations of Gwynplaine.

He felt the ground he had ascended crumbling under him, and his audience was the precipice.

There is always some one to say the word which sums all up.

Lord Scarsdale expressed the feelings of the entire assemblage in one exclamation: —

"What is that monster doing here?"

Gwynplaine stood up, dismayed and indignant, in a sort of final protest. He looked at them all fixedly.

"What am I doing here? I have come to be a warning to you! I am a monster, you say? No! I am the people! I am an exception? No! I am the rule; you are the exception! You are the chimera; I am the reality! I am the frightful man who laughs! Who laughs at

what? At you, at himself, at everything! What is his laugh? Your crime and his torment! That crime he flings at your head! That punishment he casts in your face! I laugh, and that means I weep!"

He paused. There was less noise. The laughter continued, but it was more subdued. He may have fancied that he had regained a certain amount of attention. He breathed again, and resumed: —

"This laugh which is on my face a king placed there. This laugh expresses the desolation of mankind. This laugh means hate, enforced silence, rage, despair. This laugh was produced by torture. This laugh is forced. If Satan were marked with this laugh, it would convict God. But the Eternal is not like them that perish. Being absolute, he is just; and God hates the injustice of kings. Oh! you take me for an exception; but I am a symbol. Oh, all-powerful men, fools that you are! open your eyes. I am the incarnation of All. I represent humanity as its masters have made it. Mankind is mutilated. That which has been done to me has been done to all. In the lower classes, right, justice, truth, reason, intelligence, have been deformed, as eyes, nostrils, and ears have been deformed in me; their hearts have been made a sink of passion and pain, like mine, and their features, like mine, have been hidden in a mask of joy. Where God had placed his finger, the king set his sign-manual. Monstrous superposition! Bishops, peers, and princes, the people is a sea of suffering, smiling on the surface. My lords, I tell you that the people are what I am. To-day you oppress them; to-day you hoot at me. But there will come an ominous thaw, in which that which was as stone will become wave. A crack in the ice, and all is over. There will come an hour when a convulsion will break down your oppression; when an angry roar will reply to your jeers. Nay, that hour did

come! Thou wert of it, O my father! That hour of God did come, and was called the Republic! It was destroyed, but it will return. Meanwhile, remember that the line of kings armed with the sword was broken by Cromwell, armed with the axe. Tremble! The solution of the problem is at hand: the talons which were cut are growing again; the tongues which were torn out are floating in the air; they are turning to tongues of fire, and, scattered by the breath of darkness, are shouting through infinity; those who hunger are showing their teeth; false firmaments, built over real hells, are tottering. The people are suffering — they are suffering; and the mountains above are tottering, the chasm below is yawning. Darkness demands its change to light; the damned are discussing the elect. Behold! the coming of the people is at hand, the elevation of mankind, the beginning of the end, the red dawn of the catastrophe! Yes, all these things are in this laugh of mine, at which you sneer to-day! London is one perpetual *fête*. Be it so. England rings with acclamations from end to end. Well! but listen. You have your *fêtes*, — they are my laugh; you have your public rejoicings, — they are my laugh; you have your weddings, consecrations, and coronations, — they are my laugh. The births of your princes are my laugh. But above you is the thunderbolt, — that too is my laugh."

How could they stand such nonsense? The laughter burst out afresh; and now it was overwhelming. Of all the lava which that crater, the human mouth, ejects, the most corrosive is ridicule. Ridicule is a contagion which no crowd can resist. All executions do not take place on the scaffold; and men, from the moment they are assembled in a body, whether in mobs or in senates, have always a ready executioner among them, called sarcasm. There is no torture to be compared to that of

the wretch condemned to execution by ridicule. This was Gwynplaine's fate. He was stoned with their jokes, and riddled by the scoffs shot at him. He stood there a mark for all. They sprang up; they cried "Encore;" they shook with laughter; they stamped their feet; they pulled each other's bands. The majesty of the place, the chaste ermine, the dignity of the wigs, had no effect. The lords laughed, the bishops laughed, the judges laughed, the old men derided, the youths' benches were in convulsions. The Archbishop of Canterbury nudged the Archbishop of York; Henry Compton, Bishop of London, brother of Lord Northampton, held his sides; the Lord Chancellor bowed his head, probably to conceal his inclination to laugh; and, at the bar, that statue of respect, the Usher of the Black Rod, was laughing also.

Gwynplaine had folded his arms; and, surrounded by all those faces, young and old, from which this grand Homeric jubilee had burst forth; in that whirlwind of clapping hands, of stamping feet, and of wild hurrahs; in that mad buffoonery of which he was the centre; in that splendid overflow of hilarity; in the midst of that unmeasured gaiety, — he felt the very bitterness of death. All was over. He could no longer master the face which betrayed, nor the audience which insulted him.

That eternal and fatal law, by which the grotesque is linked with the sublime — by which the laugh re-echoes the groan, parody rides behind despair, and seeming is opposed to being — had never been more forcibly exemplified. Never had a more sinister light illumined the depths of human darkness.

Gwynplaine was assisting at the final destruction of his destiny by a burst of laughter. This was now irremediable. Having fallen, we can raise ourselves up;

but being pulverized, never. Their insulting and contemptuous mockery had reduced him to dust.

Everything depends upon one's surroundings. That which was triumph in the Green Box was disgrace and catastrophe in the House of Lords. What was applause there was insult here. He felt something like the reverse side of his mask. On one side of that mask he had the sympathy of the people, who welcomed Gwynplaine; on the other, the contempt of the great, spurning Lord Fermain Clancharlie. On one side, attraction; on the other, repulsion; both leading him to ruin. He felt himself, as it were, stabbed from behind. Fate deals treacherous blows. Everything will be explained hereafter, but, in the mean time, destiny is a snare, and man sinks into its pitfalls. He had expected to triumph, and was greeted with laughter. Such apotheoses have lugubrious terminations. There is a dreary expression, — to be sobered; tragical wisdom born of drunkenness! In the midst of that tempest of gaiety mingled with ferocity, Gwynplaine fell into a reverie.

An assembly in mad merriment drifts as chance directs, and loses its compass when it gives itself up to laughter. None knew whither they were tending, or what they were doing.

The House was obliged to rise, adjourned by the Lord Chancellor, "owing to extraordinary circumstances," to the next day. The peers broke up. They bowed to the royal throne and departed. Echoes of prolonged laughter were heard dying away in the corridors.

Assemblies, besides their official doors, have — under tapestry, under projections, and under arches — all sorts of hidden doors, by which the members escape like water through the cracks in a vase.

In a short time the chamber was deserted. This takes place quickly and almost imperceptibly, and these

places, so lately full of commotion, suddenly relapse into silence.

Reverie carries one far; and one by long dreaming seems to reach, as it were, another planet.

Gwynplaine suddenly awoke from such a dream. He was alone. The chamber was empty. He had not even observed that the House had been adjourned. All the peers had departed, even his sponsors. There only remained here and there some of the lower officers of the House, waiting for his lordship to depart before they put the covers on, and extinguished the lights.

Mechanically he placed his hat on his head, and leaving his seat, directed his steps to the great door opening into the gallery. As he was passing through the opening, a door-keeper relieved him of his peer's robes. He was scarcely conscious of the fact. In another instant, he was in the gallery.

The officials who remained, noticed with astonishment that the peer had gone out without bowing to the throne!

CHAPTER VIII.

HE WOULD BE A GOOD BROTHER, WERE HE NOT A GOOD SON.

THERE was no one in the gallery.

Gwynplaine crossed the circular space, from whence they had removed the arm-chair and the tables, and where no trace of his investiture now remained. Candelabra and lustres, placed at certain intervals, marked the way out. Thanks to this row of lights, he retraced without difficulty, through the suite of saloons and galleries, the way which he had followed on his arrival with the King-at-Arms and the Usher of the Black Rod. He saw no one, except here and there some old lord plodding heavily along in front of him.

Suddenly, in the silence of those great deserted rooms, bursts of excited exclamations reached him, — a sort of nocturnal tumult unusual in such a place. He directed his steps to the place whence this noise proceeded, and found himself in a spacious hall, dimly lighted, which was one of the exits from the House of Lords. He saw a great glass door open, a flight of steps, footmen and links, a square outside, and a few coaches waiting at the bottom of the steps. This was the spot from which the noise which he had heard proceeded.

Within the door, and under the hall lamp, was a noisy group of men, shouting and gesticulating. Gwynplaine approached through the gloom. They were quarrelling. On one side there were ten or twelve young lords, who

wanted to go out; on the other, a man with his hat on, like themselves, upright and with a haughty brow, who barred their passage.

This man was Tom-Jim-Jack.

Some of these lords were still in their robes, others had thrown them off, and were in their usual attire. Tom-Jim-Jack wore a hat with plumes, — not white, like the peers; but green, tipped with orange. He was embroidered and decked with gold lace from head to foot, had flowing bows of ribbon and lace round his wrists and neck, and was feverishly fingering with his left hand the hilt of the sword which hung from his waist-belt, and on the scabbard of which an admiral's anchors were chased.

It was he who was speaking, addressing himself to the young lords; and Gwynplaine overheard the following:

"I told you you were cowards. You wish me to withdraw my words. So be it. You are not cowards; you are idiots. You all combined against one man. Was not that cowardice? All right. Then it was stupidity. He spoke to you, and you did not understand him. Here, the old are hard of hearing and the young devoid of intelligence. I am one of your own order to quite sufficient extent to tell you the truth. This new-comer is peculiar, and he has uttered a heap of nonsense, I admit; but amid all that nonsense there were some things which were true. His speech was incoherent, undigested, poorly delivered. Be it so. He repeated 'You know, you know,' too often; but a man who was but yesterday a clown at a fair cannot be expected to speak like Aristotle or like Doctor Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. The vermin, the lions, the address to the under-clerks, — all that was in bad taste. Who says it was n't? It was an excited, fragmentary and topsy-turvy harangue; but here and there came out facts which were true. It is no small

thing to speak even as he did, seeing it is not his trade. I should like to see you do it. Yes; you! What he said about the lepers at Burton Lazars is an undeniable fact. Besides, he is not the first man who has talked nonsense. In short, my lords, I do not like to see the many set upon one. Such is my humour; and I ask your lordships' permission to take offence. You have displeased me; I am angry. I am grateful to God for having drawn up from the depths of degradation this peer of England, and for having given back his inheritance to the heir; and, without heeding whether it will or will not affect my own affairs, I consider it a fine sight to see an insect transformed into an eagle, and Gwynplaine into Lord Clancharlie. My lords, I forbid you to hold any opinion but mine. I regret that Lord Lewis Duras should not be here. I should like to insult him. My lords, it is Fermain Clancharlie who has been the peer, and you who have been the mountebanks. As for his laugh, it is not his fault. You have laughed at that laugh; men should not laugh at misfortune. If you think that people cannot laugh at you as well, you are very much mistaken. You are ugly. You are badly dressed. My Lord Haversham, I saw your mistress the other day; she is hideous, — a duchess, but a monkey. Gentlemen who laugh, I repeat that I should like to hear you try to say four consecutive words! Many men jabber; very few speak. You fancy you know something, because you have spent a few idle years at Oxford or Cambridge, and because, before being peers of England on the benches of Westminster, you have been asses on the benches at Gonville and Caius. Here I am; and I choose to tell you the truth to your faces. You have just been impudent to this new peer, — a monster, certainly; but a monster at the mercy of beasts. I had rather be that man than you. I was present at the sitting, in my place

as possible heir to a peerage. I heard all. I have not the right to speak; but I have the right to be a gentleman. Your jeering airs annoyed me. That is the reason why I have waited for you at the door. We must have a few words, for we have some arrangements to make. Does it not strike you that you failed a little in respect towards myself? My lords, I entertain a firm determination to kill a few of you. All you who are here, — Thomas Tufton, Earl of Thanet; Savage, Earl Rivers; Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland; Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester; you Barons, Gray of Rolleston, Cary Hunsdon, Escrick, Rockingham, little Carteret; Robert Darcy, Earl of Holderness; William, Viscount Hutton; and Ralph, Duke of Montagu; and any who choose, I, David Dirry-Moir, an officer of the fleet, summon, call, and command you to provide yourselves, in all haste, with seconds and umpires, and I will meet you face to face and hand to hand, to-night, at once, to-morrow, by day or night, by sunlight or by candle-light, where, when, and how you please, so long as there is only two sword-lengths' space; and you will do well to look to the flints of your pistols and the edges of your rapiers, for it is my firm intention to cause many vacancies in the peerage. Ogle Cavendish, take your measures, and think of your motto, *Cavendo tutus;* Marmaduke Langdale, you would do well to order a coffin to be brought with you, like your ancestor, Grindold. George Booth, Earl of Warrington, you will never again see the County Palatine of Chester, or your labyrinth like that of Crete, or the high towers of Dunham Massy! As for Lord Vaughan, he is young enough to talk impertinently, and too old to answer for it, so I shall hold his nephew Richard Vaughan, Member of Parliament for the Borough of Merioneth accountable for his words. As for you, John Campbell, Earl of Greenwich, I will kill you as Achon killed Matas; but with a fair cut,

and not from behind, it being my custom to present my heart and not my back to the point of the sword. I have spoken my mind, my lords. And so use witchcraft, if you like. Consult the fortune-tellers. Grease your skins with ointments and drugs to make them invulnerable; hang round your necks charms of the devil or the virgin; I will fight you blest or curst, and I will not even have you searched to see if you have any amulets upon you. On foot or on horseback, on the high road if you wish it, in Piccadilly, or at Charing Cross; and they shall take up the pavement for our meeting, as they unpaved the court of the Louvre for the duel between Guise and Bassompierre. All of you! Do you hear? I mean to fight you all. Dormer, Earl of Caërnarvon, I will make you swallow my sword up to the hilt, as Marolles did Lisle Marivaux, and then we shall see, my lords, whether you will laugh or not. You, Burlington, who look like a girl of seventeen, you shall choose between the lawn of your house in Middlesex, and your beautiful garden at Londesborough, in Yorkshire, to be buried in. I beg to inform your lordships that it does not suit me to allow your insolence in my presence. I will chastise you, my lords. I take it ill that you should have ridiculed Lord Fermain Clancharlie. He is worth more than you. As Clancharlie, he has rank, as you have; as Gwynplaine, he has intellect, which you have not. I make his cause my cause: insult to him insult to me, and your ridicule my wrath. We shall see who will come out of this affair alive, because I challenge you to the death. Do you understand? With any weapon, in any fashion, and you shall choose the death that pleases you best; and since you are clowns as well as gentlemen, I proportion my defiance to your qualities, and I give you your choice of any way in which a man can be killed, from the sword of the prince to the fist of the blackguard."

To this furious onslaught of words, the whole group of young noblemen responded with contemptuous smiles.

"Agreed," they said.

"I choose pistols," said Burlington.

"I," said Escrick, "the ancient combat of the lists, with the mace and the dagger."

"I," said Holderness, "the duel with two knives, long and short, stripped to the waist, and breast to breast."

"Lord David," said the Earl of Thanet, "you are a Scot. I choose the claymore."

"I, the sword," said Rockingham.

"I," said Duke Ralph, "prefer fists."

Gwynplaine came out of the shadow. He directed his steps towards him whom he had hitherto called Tom-Jim-Jack, but in whom now, however, he began to perceive something more.

"I thank you," said he, "but this is my business."

Every head turned towards him.

Gwynplaine advanced. He felt himself drawn towards the man whom he heard called Lord David, — his defender, and perhaps something nearer. Lord David drew back.

"Oh!" said he. "It is you, is it? This is well-timed. I have a word for you as well. Just now you spoke of a woman, who, after having loved Lord Linnæus Clancharlie, loved Charles II."

"It is true."

"Sir, you insulted my mother."

"Your mother!" cried Gwynplaine. "In that case, as I guessed, we are — "

"Brothers," answered Lord David, and he struck Gwynplaine full in the face.

"We are brothers," said he; "so we can fight. One can only fight one's equal; and who is one's equal if not one's brother? I will send you my seconds; to-morrow we will cut each other's throats."

BOOK IX.

IN RUINS.

CHAPTER I.

IT IS THROUGH EXCESS OF GREATNESS THAT MAN REACHES EXCESS OF MISERY.

AS midnight tolled from St. Paul's, a man who had just crossed London Bridge struck into the lanes of Southwark. There were no lamps lighted, it being at that time the custom in London, as in Paris, to extinguish the street-lamps at eleven o'clock, — that is, to put them out just as they became necessary. The streets were dark and deserted. When the lamps are out, men stay in. He whom we speak of advanced with hurried strides. He was strangely dressed for walking at such an hour. He wore a coat of embroidered silk, a sword by his side, a hat with white plumes, and no cloak. The watchmen, as they saw him pass, said, "It is a lord walking for a wager," and they moved out of his way with the respect due to a lord and to a better.

This man was Gwynplaine.

He was making his escape.

Where was he? He did not know. We have said that the soul has its cyclones, — fearful whirlwinds, in which heaven, the sea, day, night, life, death, are all

mingled in unintelligible horror. It can no longer distinguish Truth; it is crushed by things in which it does not believe. All becomes chaos. The firmament pales. Infinity is empty. The mind of the sufferer wanders. He feels himself dying. He craves for a star. What did Gwynplaine feel? a thirst, — a thirst to see Dea.

He was conscious only of that craving. To reach the Green Box again, and the Tadcaster Inn, with its noise and lights, full of the cordial laughter of the people; to find Ursus and Homo, to see Dea again, to re-enter life.

Disillusion, like a bow, shoots its arrow, man, towards the True. Gwynplaine hastened on. He approached Tarrinzeau Field. He no longer walked now, he ran. His eyes pierced the darkness before him. His glance preceded him, eagerly seeking his goal. What a moment it would be for him when he should see the lighted windows of the Tadcaster Inn again.

He reached the bowling-green. He turned the corner of the wall, and saw before him, at the other end of the field, some distance off, the inn, — the only house, it will be remembered, in the field where the fair was held.

He looked. There was no light; nothing but a dark mass there.

He shuddered. Then he said to himself that it was late; that the tavern was shut up, as was very natural; that every one was asleep; that he had only to awaken Nicless or Govicum; that he must go up to the inn and knock at the door. He did so, no longer running now, but rushing wildly.

He reached the inn, breathless. It is when struggling in the invisible convulsions of the soul until he knows not whether he is in life or in death, that all the delicacy of a man's affection for his loved ones, being yet unimpaired, proves a heart true. When all else is swallowed up, tenderness still floats unshattered.

He approached the inn as noiselessly as possible. He recognized the nook, the old dog kennel, where Govicum used to sleep. In it, contiguous to the lower room, was a window overlooking the field. Gwynplaine tapped softly on the pane. It would suffice to awaken Govicum, he thought. There was no sound in Govicum's room.

"At his age," said Gwynplaine, "a boy sleeps soundly."

With the back of his hand he knocked gently against the window. Nothing stirred.

He knocked louder twice. Still nothing stirred. Then, feeling somewhat uneasy, he went to the door of the inn and knocked. No one answered. He reflected, and a cold shudder began to creep over him.

"Master Nicless is old, children sleep soundly, and old men heavily. Courage! louder!"

He had tapped, he had knocked, he had kicked the door; now he flung himself against it.

This recalled to him a vague recollection of Weymouth, where, as a child, he had carried Dea, an infant, in his arms.

He battered the door again violently, like a lord, which, alas! he was.

The house remained silent. He felt that he was losing his senses. He no longer thought of caution. He shouted: —

"Nicless! Govicum!"

At the same time he looked up at the windows, to see if any light was visible. But the inn was blank. Not a voice, not a sound, not a glimmer of light. He went to the gate and knocked at it, kicked against it, and shook it, crying out wildly: —

"Ursus! Homo!"

The wolf did not bark.

A cold sweat stood in drops upon his brow. He glanced around him. The night was dark; but there

were stars enough to render the fair-ground visible. He saw — a melancholy sight to him — that everything on it had vanished.

Not a single van was visible. The circus was gone. Not a tent, not a booth, not a cart remained. The strollers, with their thousand noisy cries, who had swarmed there, had given place to a dark and sullen void.

All were gone.

A frantic anxiety took possession of him. What did this mean? What had happened? Was no one left? Could it be that everything connected with his past life had crumbled away behind him? What had happened to them all? Good heavens! He rushed like a tempest against the house. He pounded on the small door, the gate, the windows, the window-shutters, the walls, with fists and feet, furious with terror and agony of mind.

He called Nicless, Govicum, Fibi, Vinos, Ursus, Homo. He tried every shout and every sound against this wall. At times he waited and listened; but the house remained mute and dead. Then, exasperated, he began again with blows, shouts, and repeated knockings, re-echoed all around. It might have been thunder trying to awake the grave.

There is a certain stage of fright in which a man becomes terrible. He who fears everything, fears nothing. He would do battle with the Sphinx. He defies the Unknown.

Gwynplaine renewed the attack in every possible form, stopping, resuming, unwearying in the shouts and appeals with which he assailed the tragic silence. He called a thousand times on the names of those who should have been there. He shrieked out every name except that of Dea, — a precaution which he could not have explained to himself, but which instinct inspired even in his distraction.

Having exhausted calls and cries, nothing was left but to break in.

"I must enter the house," he said to himself; "but how?"

He broke a pane of glass in Govicum's room by thrusting his hand through it, tearing the flesh; he drew the bolt of the sash and opened the window. Perceiving that his sword was in the way, he tore it off angrily, — scabbard, blade, and belt, — and flung it on the pavement. Then he raised himself by the inequalities in the wall, and, though the window was narrow, he managed to get through it. He entered the inn. Govicum's bed, dimly visible in its corner, was there; but Govicum was not in it. If Govicum was not in his bed, it was evident that Nicless could not be in his.

The whole house was dark. He felt in that shadowy interior the mysterious immobility of emptiness, and that vague fear which signifies, "There is no one here."

Wild with anxiety, Gwynplaine crossed the lower room, knocking against the tables, upsetting the earthenware, throwing down the benches, tumbling over the jugs, and, striding over the furniture, reached the door leading into the court, and broke it open with one blow from his knee, which sprung the lock. The door turned on its hinges. He looked into the court. The Green Box was no longer there.

CHAPTER II.

THE DREGS.

GWYNPLAINE left the house, and began to explore Tarrinzeau Field in every direction. He explored every place where the tents and vans had stood the day before. He knocked at the booths, though he knew well that they were uninhabited. He pounded on everything that looked like a door or a window. Not a voice arose from the darkness. Something like death seemed to have settled down upon the place.

The ant-hill had been razed. The threats of the authorities had evidently been carried out. There had been what, in our days, would be called a raid. Tarrinzeau Field was worse than a desert; it had been scoured, and every corner of it scratched up, as it were, by pitiless claws. The unfortunate fair-green had been turned inside out, and completely emptied.

Gwynplaine, after having carefully searched every inch of ground, left the green, struck into the crooked streets abutting on the site called East Point, and directed his steps towards the Thames.

He had threaded his way through a net-work of lanes, bounded only by walls and hedges, when he suddenly felt the fresh breeze from the water, heard the dull lapping of the river, and saw a parapet in front of him. It was the parapet of the Effroc Wall.

This parapet bounded a part of the quay, which was very short and very narrow. Under it, the high wall extended straight down to the dark water below.

Gwynplaine walked to the parapet, and leaning his elbows on it, rested his head in his hands, and fixed his eyes on the depths below.

Did he see the water? No. Then at what was he gazing? At the shadow, — not the shadow below, but within him. In the melancholy landscape, which he scarcely noticed; in the outer depths, which his eyes did not pierce, — were the blurred outlines of masts and spars. Below the Effroc Wall there was nothing on the river; but the quay sloped insensibly downwards till, some distance off, it met a pier, at which several vessels were lying, some of which had just arrived, while others were on the point of departure. These vessels were connected with the shore by little jetties, constructed for the purpose, some of stone, some of wood, or by movable gangways. All of them, whether moored to the jetties or at anchor, were wrapt in silence. There was no noise or stir on board, it being a habit of sailors to sleep when they can, and wake only when wanted. If any of the craft were to sail at high tide that night, the crews were not yet awake.

The hulls, like huge black bubbles, and the rigging, like threads mingled with ladders, were barely visible. All was dim and confused. Here and there a red light pierced the gloom.

Gwynplaine saw nothing of all this. What he was musing on was destiny.

He was in a dream, — a vision, — giddy in presence of an inexorable reality.

He fancied that he heard something like an earthquake behind him, — it was the laughter of the lords.

He had just emerged from that ordeal. He had come out of it, having received a blow, and from whom?

From his own brother!

Flying from the laughter, carrying the blow with him,

seeking refuge, a wounded bird, in his nest, rushing from hate and seeking love, what had he found?

Darkness. No one. Everything gone.

He compared this darkness with the brilliant dream in which he had indulged.

What a crumbling away!

Gwynplaine had just reached that grim region, — vacancy. The Green Box gone, the universe too had vanished.

What could have happened? Where were they? They had evidently been carried away. The decree of fortune which had made him great had annihilated the only friends he had in the world. It was almost certain that he would never see them again. Precautions had been taken against that. They had cleared the fair-green, beginning with Nicless and Govicum, so that he should gain no clew through them. Inexorable dispersion! That fearful social system, at the same time that it pulverized him in the House of Lords, crushed them in their little cabin. They were lost; Dea was lost, — lost to him forever. Powers of heaven! where was she? And he had not been there to defend her!

To make conjectures concerning the absent whom we love, is to put one's self to the torture. He inflicted this torture on himself. But every supposition which he made, caused him to groan with agony.

Through a succession of bitter reflections he remembered a man who was evidently fatal to him, and who had called himself Barkilphedro. That man had inscribed on his brain an ominous sentence which reappeared now. He had written in such flaming ink that each letter seemed formed of fire, the enigmatical words, the meaning of which was now only too apparent: "Destiny never opens one door without closing another."

All was over. The final shadows had gathered around

him. In every man's fate there may be an end of the world so far as he is concerned. This is called despair.

This, then, was what he had come to.

The cloud had passed. He had been mingled with it. It had lain heavily on his eyes, it had disordered his brain. He had been blinded outwardly, intoxicated inwardly. This had lasted but for a brief moment. Then everything melted away, the cloud and his life as well. Awaking from the dream, he found himself alone.

All vanished, all gone, all lost. Night. Nothingness. Such was his horizon.

He was alone.

Alone has a synonym; it is *dead.* Despair is a good accountant. It sets itself to find the sum total, it adds up everything, even to the farthings. It charges Heaven with its thunder-bolts and its pin-pricks, alike. It tries to find out what it has to expect from fate. It argues, weighs, and calculates, outwardly cool, while the burning lava is flowing fiercely within.

Gwynplaine examined himself, and examined his fate.

The backward glance of thought, — terrible recapitulation!

When we are at the top of a mountain, we gaze down the precipice; when we are at its base, we look up at heaven. And we say, I was there.

Gwynplaine was in the very lowest depths of misery. How sudden, too, had been his fall!

Such is the hideous swiftness of misfortune, although it is so heavy that we might fancy it slow. But no! It would likewise appear from its whiteness, snow should possess the immobility of a winding-sheet; yet this is contradicted by the avalanche.

The avalanche is snow transformed into a devouring furnace. It remains frozen, but it devours nevertheless.

The avalanche had enveloped Gwynplaine. He had been torn like a rag, uprooted like a tree, precipitated like a stone. He recalled all the circumstances of his fall. He put questions to himself and returned answers. There is no judge so searching as conscience conducting its own trial.

How much remorse was mingled with his despair? This he wished to find out, and dissected his conscience. Excruciating vivisection!

His absence had caused a catastrophe. But had this absence depended on him? In all that had happened, had he been a free agent? No! He had felt himself captive. What was that which had arrested and detained him, — a prison? No. A chain? No. What then? Lust! He had sunk into the slough of greatness.

To whom has it not happened to be free in appearance, yet to feel that his wings are hampered?

There had been something like a snare spread for him. What is at first temptation, ends in captivity.

Nevertheless (and his conscience pressed him on this point) had he merely submitted to the inevitable? No; he had welcomed it.

Force had been used with him to a certain extent, it is true; but he, to a certain extent, had yielded. To have allowed himself to be carried off was not his fault; but to have allowed himself to be thus inebriated, was his weakness. There had been a moment — a decisive moment — when the question was put to him. This Barkilphedro had placed an alternative before Gwynplaine, and had given him full power to decide his fate by a word. Gwynplaine might have said, "No." He had said, "Yes."

From that "Yes," uttered in a moment of weakness, all this misery had come. Gwynplaine realized this now in the bitter after-taste of that consent.

Nevertheless, — for he debated with himself, — was it then so great a crime to take possession of his rights, of his patrimony, of his heritage, of his home; and, as a patrician, of the rank of his ancestors, as an orphan of the name of his father? What had he accepted? A restitution. Made by whom? By Providence.

Then his mind revolted. Senseless acceptance! What a bargain he had made, what a foolish exchange! He had trafficked with Providence at a loss. For an income of £80,000 a year; for seven or eight titles; for ten or twelve palaces; for houses in town, and castles in the country; for a hundred lackeys; for packs of hounds, and carriages, and armorial bearings; to be a judge and legislator; for a coronet and purple robes, like a king; to be a baron and a marquis; to be a Peer of England, he had given the humble home of Ursus and the smile of Dea. For shipwreck and destruction in the surging immensity of greatness, he had bartered happiness. For the ocean he had given the pearl. O madman! O fool! O dupe!

Nevertheless, — and here the objection seemed based on firmer ground, — everything connected with this wonderful good fortune which had befallen him had not been reprehensible. Perhaps there would have been selfishness in renunciation; perhaps he had only done his duty in the acceptance. Suddenly transformed into a lord, what ought he to have done? Such complications are apt to create perplexity of mind. This had been the case with him. Duty gave conflicting orders. Duty on both sides at once, duty multiple and contradictory; this was the bewilderment which he had suffered. It was this that had paralyzed him, especially when he had not refused to take the journey from Corleone Lodge to the House of Lords. What we call rising in life is leaving the safe for the dangerous path. Which is, henceforth,

the straight line? Towards whom is our first duty? Is it towards those nearest to ourselves, or is it towards mankind generally? Do we not cease to belong to our own circumscribed circle, and become part of the great family of men? As we ascend, we feel an increased strain on our virtue. The higher we rise, the greater this strain becomes. The increase of privileges entails an increase of duty. We come to many by-ways, phantom roads perchance, and we imagine that we see the finger of conscience pointing each one of them out to us. Which shall we take? Change our direction, remain where we are, advance, go back? What are we to do? That there should be cross-roads in conscience is strange enough; but responsibility may become a labyrinth.

And when a man is imbued with an idea, when he is the incarnation of a fact, — when he is a symbolical man at the same time that he is a man of flesh and blood, — is not the responsibility even more oppressive? Hence the care-laden docility and the dumb anxiety of Gwynplaine; hence his obedience when summoned to take his seat. A conscientious man is often a passive man. He had heard what he fancied was the command of duty. Was not that entrance into a place where oppression could be discussed and resisted the realization of one of his dearest aspirations? When he had been called upon to speak, — he, a living specimen of the despotic whims under which, for six thousand years, mankind has groaned in agony, — had he the right to refuse? Had he the right to withdraw his head from under the tongue of fire descending from on high upon him?

In this debate of conscience, what had he said to himself? This: "The people are silent. I will be the advocate of the silent; I will speak for the dumb; I will plead the cause of the poor before the great, of the weak before the powerful. This is the cause of my elevation.

God wills what he wills, and does it. It was a wonder that Harquanonne's flask, in which was the metamorphosis of Gwynplaine into Lord Clancharlie, should have floated for fifteen years on the ocean, on the billows, in the surf, through the storms, and that all the raging of the sea did it no harm. But I can see the reason. There are destinies with secret springs. I have the key of mine, and know its enigma. I am predestined; I have a mission. I will be the poor man's lord; I will plead for those who are dumb with despair; I will interpret inarticulate remonstrance; I will translate the mutterings, the groans, the murmurs, the voices of the crowd, their ill-expressed complaints, their unintelligible words, and those beast-like cries which ignorance and suffering put into men's mouths. The clamour of men is as inarticulate as the howling of the wind. They cry out, but they are not understood; so their cries become equivalent to silence, and silence with them means throwing down their arms. This forced disarmament calls for help. I will be their help; I will be the Denunciator; I will be the mouth-piece of the people. Thanks to me, they shall be understood. This will be fine, indeed."

Yes; it is fine to plead for the dumb; but to plead to the deaf is disheartening. And that was the second scene in the drama.

Alas! he had failed irremediably.

The elevation in which he had believed, the high fortune, had melted away like a mirage. And what a fall! To be drowned in a surge of laughter!

He had fancied himself strong, he who, for so many years, had floated with observant mind on the wide sea of suffering; he who had brought back out of the great shadow so touching a cry. He had been dashed against that huge rock, the heartlessness of the fortunate. He had believed himself an avenger; he was but a clown.

He thought that he wielded a thunder-bolt; he could only excite mirth. In place of emotion, he met with mockery. He sobbed; they shouted with laughter; and under that gaiety he had sunk, fatally submerged.

And what had they laughed at? At his laugh.

So that trace of an execrable act, of which he must bear the mark forever, — the stigma of laughter, image of the sham contentment of nations under their oppressors; that mask of joy produced by torture; that grimace which he carried on his features; the scar which signified "Jussu regis," the attestation of a crime committed by the king towards him, and the symbol of crime committed by royalty towards the people, — that it was which had triumphed over him; that it was which had overwhelmed him; so the accusation against the executioner turned into sentence upon the victim. What a shameful withholding of justice! Royalty, having got the better of his father, had also got the better of him! The evil that had been done had served as pretext and as motive for the evil that remained to be done. Against whom were the lords incensed? Against the torturer? No. Against the tortured. Here is the throne; there, the people. Here, James II.; there, Gwynplaine. That confrontation, indeed, brought to light an outrage and a crime. What was the outrage? Disfigurement. What was the crime? Suffering. Let misery hide itself in silence, otherwise it becomes treason. And those men who had dragged Gwynplaine on the hurdle of sarcasm, were they wicked? No; but they, too, had their fatality, — they were happy. They were executioners, ignorant of the fact. They were good-humoured; they saw no use in Gwynplaine. He tore out his heart to show to them, and they cried, "Go on with your play!" But — sharpest sting! — he had laughed himself. The frightful chain which bound down his soul hindered his thoughts from rising to his face. His

disfigurement extended even to his senses; and, while his conscience was indignant, his face gave it the lie, and jested. Then all was over. He was the laughing man, the caryatid of the weeping world. He was an agony petrified in hilarity, carrying the weight of a universe of calamity, and walled up forever by the gaiety, the ridicule, and the amusement of others. Of all the Oppressed, of whom he was the Incarnation, his was the most odious fate. They jeered at his distress; to them he was but an extraordinary buffoon lifted out of some frightful condensation of misery, escaped from his prison, changed to a deity, risen from the dregs of the people to the foot of the throne, mingling with the stars, and who, having once amused the damned, now amused the elect. All that was in him of generosity, of enthusiasm, of eloquence, of heart, of soul, of fury, of anger, of love, of inexpressible grief, ended in — a burst of laughter! And he proved, as he had told the Lords, that this was not the exception, but that it was the normal, ordinary, universal, unlimited, sovereign fact, so amalgamated with the routine of life that they took no account of it. The hungry pauper laughs, the beggar laughs, the felon laughs, the prostitute laughs, the orphan laughs to gain his bread; the slave laughs, the soldier laughs, the people laugh. Society is so constituted that sin and want and each and every catastrophe, fever, ulcer, and pang, is resolved on the surface of the abyss into one frightful grin of joy. Now, he was the prototype of that universal grin; that grin was himself. The law of Heaven, the unknown power which governs, had willed that a spectre, visible and palpable, a spectre of flesh and bone, should be the synopsis of the monstrous parody which we call the world; and he was that spectre.

Immutable fate!

He had cried, "Have compassion on those who suffer!"

In vain! He had striven to arouse pity, — he had only awakened horror. Such is the law of apparitions.

But though he was a spectre, he was also a man; here was the heartrending complication. A spectre without, a man within. More man than most, perhaps, since his twofold character was the type of all humanity. And he felt that humanity was at once present in him, and absent from him. There was something insurmountable in his existence. What was he? A disinherited heir? No; for he was a lord. Was he a lord? No; for he was a rebel. He was the light-bearer; a terrible spoilsport. He was not Satan, certainly; but he was Lucifer. His entrance, with his torch in his hand, was ominous. Ominous for whom? For the tyrant. Terrrible to whom? To the terrible. Therefore, they rejected him. Enter their ranks, be accepted by them? Never! The obstacle which his face presented was frightful; but the obstacle which his ideas presented was still more insurmountable. His sentiments seemed to them more deformed than his face. He had no thought in common with the world of the great and powerful, in which by a freak of fate he had been born, and from which another freak of fate had expelled him. There was a mask between men and his face, and a wall between society and his mind. In mixing, from infancy, a wandering mountebank, with that strong rough element which we call the crowd, in saturating himself with the spirit of the multitude, and impregnating himself with the great soul of humanity, he had lost, in the common sense of the whole of mankind, the particular sense of the reigning classes. On their heights, he was impossible. He had reached them wet with water from the well of Truth; the odour of the abyss was on him. He was repugnant to those perfumed princes. To those who live on fiction, reality is disgusting; and one who thirsts for flattery spits out

the truth, when he has happened to drink it by mistake. What Gwynplaine brought them was not fit for their table. What was it? Reason, wisdom, justice; and they rejected it with disgust.

There were bishops there. He brought God into their presence. Who was this intruder?

The two poles repel each other. They can never amalgamate. Hence the result — a cry of wrath — when they were brought into juxtaposition: all the misery of mankind concentrated in one man brought face to face with all the pride and arrogance of mankind concentrated in a caste.

Abuse is useless. The truth should suffice; but Gwynplaine fully realized the entire futility of his effort. He had proved the deafness of those in high places. The privileged have no hearing on the side next the disinherited. Is it their fault? Alas! no. Forgive them! To be moved would be to abdicate. Expect nothing of lords and princes. One who is satisfied is inexorable. To those that have their fill, the hungry do not exist. The happy ignore and isolate themselves. On the threshold of their paradise, as on the threshold of hell, should be written, "Leave all hope behind."

Gwynplaine had met with the reception of a spectre entering the dwelling of the gods.

All that was within him rose in rebellion. No, he was no spectre, — he was a man. He told them, he shouted to them, that he was a man.

He was not a phantom; he was living flesh. He had a brain, and he thought; he had a heart, and he loved; he had a soul, and he hoped. Indeed, to have hoped overmuch was his whole crime.

Alas! he had been foolish enough to believe in that thing, at once so brilliant and so ghastly, which is called

Society. He who had been without the pale so long, had entered it.

It had at once, and at first sight, made him its three offers, and given him its three gifts, — marriage, family, and caste. Marriage? He had seen prostitution on the threshold. Family? His brother had struck him, and would be awaiting him the next day, sword in hand. Caste? It had burst into laughter in his face, at him, the patrician; at him, the wretch. It had rejected almost before it had admitted him; so that his first three steps into the dense shadow of society had opened three gulfs beneath him.

And it was by a treacherous transformation that his disaster had begun; and catastrophe had approached him under the aspect of apotheosis!

Ascend had signified *descend.*

His fate was the reverse of Job's. It was through prosperity that adversity had reached him.

O tragical enigma of life! Behold what pitfalls! As a child, he had wrestled with the night, and proved himself the stronger; as a man, he had wrestled with destiny, and overcome it. Out of his very disfigurement he had achieved success; and out of misery, happiness. Of his exile he had made an asylum. A vagabond, like the birds of the air, he had found his crumb of bread. Alone and untutored, he had wrestled with the crowd, and made it his friend. An athlete, he had wrestled with that lion, the people, and tamed it. Unaided, he had battled against Want; he had faced the dreary necessity of living; and by amalgamating every joy of his heart with misery, he had at last converted poverty into riches. Just as he began to fancy himself the conqueror of life, he was suddenly attacked by fresh forces, proceeding from unknown depths; not with threats this time, but with smiles and caresses Love, serpent-like

and sensual, had been revealed to him, who was blessed with angelic love. The flesh had tempted him, who had lived heretofore on the ideal. He had heard voluptuous words like cries of rage; he had felt the clasp of a woman's arms, like the convolutions of a snake. The fascinations of the false had succeeded the light of the true; for it is not the flesh that is real, but the soul. The flesh is ashes, the soul is flame. For the little circle which was allied to him by the relationship of poverty and toil, and which was his true and natural family, had been substituted the social family, — his family in blood, but of tainted blood; and even before he had entered it, he found himself face to face with an intended fratricide. Alas! he had allowed himself to be returned to that society, of which Brantôme (whom he had not read), said, "The son has a right to challenge his father!" A fatal chance had cried out to him, "Thou art not of the crowd; thou art of the chosen few," and had opened the roof above his head like a trap in the sky, and shot him up through this opening, causing him to appear, wild and unexpected, in the midst of princes and rulers.

Then suddenly he saw around him, instead of people who applauded him, lords who cursed him. Mournful metamorphosis! Ignominious ennobling! Rude spoliation of all his former happiness! Destruction of his life by derision! Gwynplaine, Clancharlie, the lord, the mountebank, torn out of his old lot, as well as out of his new lot, by the beaks of those eagles.

What availed it that he had begun life by triumphing over obstacles. What had his early triumphs profited him. Alas! the fall must come, ere destiny be complete.

So, half against his will and half with his consent — because after he had done with the wapentake he had had to deal with Barkilphedro, and he had yielded a certain

amount of consent to his abduction — he had forsaken the real for the chimerical; the true for the false; Dea for Josiana; love for pride; liberty for power; labour, poor but proud, for opulence full of unknown responsibilities; the seclusion in which God dwells, for the lurid flames in which demons live; paradise for Olympus!

He had tasted the golden fruit. He was now spitting out the ashes into which it had turned.

Lamentable result! Defeat, failure, ruin, complete overthrow of all his hopes, frustrated by ridicule! Immeasurable disappointment! And what was there for him in the future? If he looked forward to the morrow, what did he see? A drawn sword, the point of which was against his breast, and the hilt in the hand of his brother. He could see nothing but the hideous flash of that sword. Josiana and the House of Lords made up the background in a monstrous *chiaroscuro* full of tragic shadows.

And that brother seemed so brave and chivalrous! Alas! he had hardly seen the Tom-Jim-Jack, who had defended Gwynplaine, the Lord David, who had defended Lord Clancharlie; but he had had time to receive a blow from him and to love him.

He was crushed.

He felt that it was impossible for him to proceed further. Everything had crumbled into ruin about him. Besides, what was the good of it? Unutterable weariness dwells in the depths of despair.

The trial had been made. It could not be repeated.

Gwynplaine was like a gamester who has played all his trumps away, one after another. He had allowed himself to be lured to a fearful gambling table without knowing what he was about; for — so subtle is the poison of illusion! — he had staked Dea against Josiana, and had gained a monster; he had staked Ursus against a family,

and had gained only insult; he had staked his mountebank platform against his seat in the House of Lords, and in place of the applause which had been his, he had gained only insult. His last card had fallen on that fatal green cloth, the deserted bowling-green. Gwynplaine had lost. Nothing remained but to pay. Pay, wretched man!

The thunder-stricken lie still. Gwynplaine remained motionless. Any one watching him from afar, in the shadow, rigid and motionless, might have fancied that he saw an upright stone.

Hell, the serpent, and reverie are all tortuous. Gwynplaine was now descending the sepulchral spirals of profound thought.

He reviewed the strange world of which he had just caught a glimpse, with the cold scrutiny of a last look. Marriage, but no love; family, but no brotherly affection; riches, but no conscience; beauty, but no modesty; justice, but no equity; order, but no equilibrium; authority, but no right; power, but no intelligence; splendour, but no refinement. Inexorable balance-sheet! He went throughout the strange vision in which his mind had been plunged. He examined successively destiny, situation, society, and himself. What was destiny? A snare. Rank? Despair. Society? Hatred. And himself? A defeated man. In the depths of his soul he cried: Society is a step-mother; Nature is the real mother. Society is the world of the flesh, Nature is the world of the soul. The one leads to the coffin, to the deal box in the grave, to the earth-worms, and ends there. The other tends to expanded wings, to transformation into the morning light, and to ascent into celestial spheres where life begins again under new and much more favourable conditions.

At last a paroxysm came over him, like a sweeping surge. At the close of life there is always a final flash,

in which everything stands clearly revealed once more. The judge meets the accused face to face. Gwynplaine reviewed all that society and all that Nature had done for him. How kind Nature had been to him! How she, who is the soul, had succoured him! Every blessing had been taken from him, even his features. The soul had given them all back, — all, even his features; because there was on earth a heavenly blind girl intended expressly for him, who could not see his ugliness, and believed him beautiful beyond comparison.

And it was from these blessings that he had allowed himself to be separated It was from this adorable girl, from his beloved one, from her tenderness, from her divine gaze, the only gaze on earth that saw his real nature, that he had strayed! Dea was his sister, because he felt between them the grand fraternity of the sky, — that mystery in which the whole of heaven is comprised. Dea, when he was a little child, was his holy virgin; because every child has his virgin, and in childhood a marriage of souls is always contracted in the fulness of innocence. Dea was his wife, for theirs was the same nest on the highest branch of the deep-rooted tree of Hymen. Dea was still more, — she was his light, for without her the entire earth was a void and nothingness; and in his eyes her head was encircled with a dazzling halo. What would become of him without Dea? What could he do with all that was himself? There was no part of him that could live without her. How, then, could he have lost sight of her for a moment? Oh, unfortunate man! He had allowed distance to intervene between himself and his star; and, by the unknown and terrible laws of gravitation in such matters, distance means immediate loss.

Where was she his star? Dea! Dea! Dea! Dea! Alas! he had lost her light. Take away the star, and

what is the sky? A dark, shapeless mass. And why had all this befallen him? Oh, what happiness had once been his! For him God had made another Eden. Too close was the resemblance, alas! even to allowing the serpent to enter; but this time it was the man who had been tempted. He had been enticed outside, and then, through a frightful snare, had fallen into a chaos of murky laughter, which was hell. Oh, misery! misery! How loathsome all that had fascinated him seemed now. Even that Josiana, frightful creature! — half beast, half goddess. Gwynplaine was now on the rear side of the eminence and could see the other aspect of that which had so dazzled him. It was baleful! His peerage was deformed; his coronet was hideous; his velvet robe, a funeral garment. The unwholesome and treacherous air of palaces seemed to poison all who breathed it, and turn them mad. How brilliant the rags of the mountebank Gwynplaine appeared to him now! Alas! where was the Green Box, the poverty, the joy, the sweet wandering life, — wandering together, like the swallows? They were never separated then; he saw her every minute, morning and evening. At table their knees, their elbows, touched; they drank from the same cup; the sun shone through the pane, but it was only the sun, and Dea was Love. At night they slept not far from each other; and a vision of Dea came and hovered over Gwynplaine, and a vision of Gwynplaine spread itself mysteriously above the head of Dea. When they woke they never could be quite sure that they had not exchanged kisses in the azure mist of dreams. Dea was the embodiment of innocence; Ursus, the personification of wisdom. They wandered from town to town; and they had for their sustenance and for a stimulant the hearty applause of the people. They were angel vagabonds, with enough human nature in their composition

for them to tread the earth and not enough of wings to fly away; and now all had vanished. Where was it gone? Could it be possible that it had been effaced forever? What breath from the tomb had swept over them?

Alas! the inexorable and relentless power of the great casts its shadow over all, and can accomplish anything. What had been done to them? And he had not been there to protect them, to fling himself in front of them, to defend them, as a lord, with his title, his peerage, and his sword; as a mountebank, with his fists and his nails! And here arose a bitter reflection, — perhaps the most bitter of all. Well! no; he could not have defended them. It was he himself who had destroyed them; it was to save him, Lord Clancharlie, from them; it was to protect his dignity from possible contact with them, that the infamous omnipotence of society had crushed them. The best way in which he could protect them would be to disappear, and then the cause of their persecution would cease. He out of the way, they would be allowed to live in peace. Into what dangerous channel were his thoughts beginning to run! Oh, why had he ever allowed himself to be separated from Dea? Was not his first duty towards her? To serve and to defend the people had been his idea; but Dea was the people. Dea was an orphan; she was blind; she represented humanity. Oh, what had they done to them? Cruel sting of remorse! His absence had left the field open for the catastrophe. He would have shared their fate; either they would have been taken and carried away with him, or he would have been swallowed up with them. And now, what would become of him without them? Gwynplaine without Dea, — was that possible? Without Dea was to be without everything. It was all over now. His beloved was lost to him forever! His life was virtually ended, for condemned and damned as Gwyn-

plaine was, what was the use of further struggle? He had nothing more to expect either of men or of heaven. Dea! Dea! Where was Dea? Lost! What! lost? He who has lost his soul can regain it through but one outlet, — death.

Gwynplaine, tragically distraught, placed his hand firmly on the parapet, as on a solution, and looked at the river.

It was his third night without sleep. A violent fever was raging in his veins. His thoughts, which he believed to be clear, were blurred. He felt an imperative need of sleep. He remained for a few instants leaning over the water. Its dark depths offered him a tranquil resting-place, — the peace of oblivion. Sinister temptation!

He took off his coat, which he folded and placed on the parapet; then he unbuttoned his waistcoat. As he was about to take it off, his hand struck against something in the pocket. It was the red book which had been given him by the librarian of the House of Lords; he drew it out, examined it in the dim light, and finding a pencil in it, he hastily wrote on the first blank page he came to, these lines: —

"I depart. Let my brother David take my place, and may he be happy!"

Then he signed, "Fermain Clancharlie, Peer of England."

He took off his waistcoat and placed it on the coat; then his hat, which he placed upon the waistcoat. In the hat he laid the red book, open at the page on which he had written. Seeing a stone lying on the ground near by, he picked it up and placed it in the hat.

Having done all this, he glanced up at the dark heavens above him; then his head sank slowly, as if drawn by an invisible thread towards the abyss.

There was a hole in the masonry near the base of the parapet; he placed his foot in it, so that his knee reached above the top, and little or no effort would be required to spring over it. He clasped his hands behind his back and leaned over.

"So be it," he murmured, fixing his eyes on the deep waters below.

Just then he felt a tongue licking his hands.

He started violently, and turned around.

Homo was behind him.

CONCLUSION.

THE NIGHT AND THE SEA.

CHAPTER I.

A WOLF MAY PROVE A GUARDIAN ANGEL.

GWYNPLAINE uttered a cry.

"Is that you, Homo?"

Homo wagged his tail. His eyes gleamed in the darkness. He was looking earnestly at Gwynplaine.

Then he began to lick his hands again. For a moment Gwynplaine was like a drunken man, so great was the revulsion of feeling caused by a return of hope.

Homo! What an apparition! During the last forty-eight hours Gwynplaine had experienced every variety of the thunder-bolt. But one was left to strike him, — the thunder-bolt of joy. And it had just fallen upon him. Certainty, or at least the clew which led to it, regained; the sudden intervention of a mysterious clemency on the part of destiny; life suddenly exclaiming, "Behold me!" in the very depths of the grave, and bringing back health and deliverance at the very moment when all expectancy had ceased; a place of safety discovered at the most critical moment in the midst of crumbling ruins, — Homo meant all this to Gwynplaine. The wolf seemed to him enveloped in a halo of light.

Meanwhile, Homo had turned round and advanced a few steps, looking back all the while to see if Gwyn-

plaine was following him. As Gwynplaine was doing so, Homo wagged his tail, and went on.

The road taken by the wolf skirted the sloping quay formed by the Effroc Wall. This slope led down to the Thames; and Gwynplaine, guided by Homo, descended it.

Homo turned his head now and then, to make sure that Gwynplaine was behind him.

In situations of supreme importance nothing approaches so near omniscient intelligence as the simple instinct of a faithful animal.

There are cases in which the animal feels that he should follow his master; others, in which he should precede him. Then the animal assumes charge of the man, as it were. His imperturbable scent endows him with the power to see in what is twilight to us. He feels a vague obligation to become a guide. Does he know that there is danger ahead, and that he can help his master to overcome it? Possibly not, but perhaps he does. In any case, Some One knows it for him. As we have already said, it often happens in life that some help which came from below, as we supposed, really came from above. Can mortal man distinguish all the mysterious forms assumed by God?

What did this animal personate? Providence.

Having reached the river, the wolf led the way along the narrow strip of land that bordered the Thames.

Without noise or bark he hastened on his way. Homo always followed his instinct, and did his duty, but with all the caution of an outlaw.

About fifty yards farther on, he stopped. A wooden platform appeared on the right. At the end of this platform, which was a kind of wharf on piles, a dark object could be dimly distinguished. It was a tolerably large vessel. On the deck of this vessel, near the prow, was a glimmer, like the last flicker of a night-lamp.

The wolf, having finally assured himself that Gwynplaine was there, bounded on the wharf. It was a long platform, floored and tarred, and supported by a network of joists, under which flowed the river. Homo and Gwynplaine soon reached the edge.

The ship moored to the wharf was a Dutch vessel, of the Japanese style, with two decks, fore and aft, and between them an open hold, reached by a ladder in which the cargo was stored. There was thus a forecastle and an after-deck, as in our old river boats, with a space between them ballasted by the freight. The paper boats made by children are of similar shape. Under the decks were the cabins, which opened into the hold and were lighted by glazed port-holes. In stowing the cargo a passage-way was left between the bales of which it consisted. These vessels had a mast at each end. The foremast was called Paul, the mainmast Peter, the ship being sailed by these two masts as the Church was guided by her two apostles. A gangway extended like a Chinese bridge, from one deck to the other, over the centre of the hold. In bad weather, two flaps on either side of this gangway were lowered on hinges, thus forming a roof over the hold; so that the ship, in bad weather, was hermetically closed. These sloops, being of very massive build, had a beam for a tiller, the strength of the rudder being necessarily proportioned to the weight of the vessel. Three men — the skipper and two sailors, with a cabin-boy — sufficed to navigate these ponderous sea-going machines. The decks, fore and aft, were, as we have already said, without bulwarks. The great lumbering hull of this vessel was painted black, and upon it, visible even in the night, stood out, in white letters, the words, "Vograat, Rotterdam."

About that time many stirring events had occurred at sea, — among others, the defeat of the Baron de Pointi's

eight ships off Cape Carnero, which had obliged the whole French fleet to take refuge at Gibraltar; so that the Channel was swept clear of every man-of-war, and merchant vessels were able to sail backwards and forwards between London and Rotterdam without a convoy.

The vessel on which the name "Vograat," was inscribed and which was now close to Gwynplaine, lay with her main-deck almost level with the wharf. There was but one step to descend, and Homo with one bound, and Gwynplaine with one stride, were on board.

The deck was clear, and no stir was perceptible. The passengers, if there were any, were probably already on board, the vessel being ready to sail, and the cargo stowed, as was apparent from the state of the hold, which was full of bales and cases. But they were, doubtless, asleep in the cabins below, as the departure was to take place during the night. In such cases, the passengers do not appear on deck until they wake the following morning. As for the crew, they were probably having their supper in the men's cabin, while awaiting the hour fixed for sailing, which was now rapidly approaching. Hence, the silence on the two decks connected by the gangway.

The wolf had almost run across the wharf; once on board, he slackened his pace into a discreet walk. He still wagged his tail, — no longer joyfully, however, but with the sad and feeble wag of an animal troubled in mind. Still preceding Gwynplaine, he passed along the after-deck, and across the gangway.

Gwynplaine, on reaching the gangway, perceived a faint light in front of him. It was the same he had seen from the shore. There was a lantern on the deck, close to the foremast, by the gleam of which was outlined in black, against the grey background of the night, what Gwynplaine instantly recognized as the old four-wheeled van belonging to Ursus.

This poor wooden tenement, cart and hut combined, in which his childhood had been passed, was fastened to the foot of the mast by strong ropes. Having been so long unused, it had become dreadfully rickety; it leaned feebly over on one side; moreover, it was suffering from that incurable malady, — old age. The materials of which it was composed were all rotten. The iron was rusty, the leather torn, the wood-work worm-eaten. There were cracks across the window in front, through which a ray from the lantern shone. The wheels were warped. The sides, the floor, and the axle-trees seemed worn out with fatigue. Altogether, it presented an indescribable appearance of beggary and decay. The shafts, which were tied up, looked like two arms raised heavenward. The whole thing was in a state of dismemberment. Under it dangled Homo's chain.

Does it not seem as if the laws and promptings of Nature would have led Gwynplaine to rush headlong forward, now that happiness and lover were once more within his reach? So they would, except in a case of deep terror like his. But he who emerges, shattered in nerve and uncertain of his way, from a series of dire catastrophes, each of which has been a fresh disappointment, is prudent even in his joy, and hesitates, lest he should bear the fatality of which he has been the victim to those whom he loves, feeling that some evil contagion may still hang about him, and so advancing towards happiness with wary steps. The gates of paradise may re-open; but before he enters, he examines the ground carefully.

So Gwynplaine, staggering under the weight of his emotion, paused and gazed around him. The wolf went and lay down silently by his chain.

CHAPTER II.

BARKILPHEDRO, HAVING AIMED AT THE EAGLE, BRINGS DOWN THE DOVE.

THE step of the little van was down, the door ajar; there was no one within. The dim light which stole through the pane in front revealed the interior of the van in a sort of melancholy *chiaroscuro.* The inscriptions of Ursus, glorifying the greatness of Lords, were distinctly visible on the dilapidated boards, which formed both the outer wall and the inside wainscotting. On a nail, near the door, Gwynplaine saw his leather gorget and his cape, as the clothes of a corpse are hung up in a dead-house. He himself had neither coat nor waistcoat on.

Behind the van there was something lying on the deck at the foot of the mast, dimly lighted by the lantern. It was a mattress, of which he could see but one corner. Some one was probably lying on this mattress, for he could see a shadow move.

He could also hear some one talking, so hiding behind the van, Gwynplaine listened.

It was Ursus' voice he heard.

That voice, so harsh in its upper, so tender in its lower, pitch; that voice which had so often upbraided Gwynplaine, but which had taught him so well, had lost all its wonted vivacity and clearness of tone. It was husky and low, and died away in a sigh at the end of every sentence. It bore but a faint resemblance to

the firm voice of old. It was the voice of one from whom all hope had fled. A voice may become a ghost.

Ursus seemed to be engaged in a monologue rather than a conversation. We are already aware, however, that soliloquizing was a habit with him. It was for this reason that he passed for a madman.

Gwynplaine held his breath, so as not to lose a word that Ursus said, and this is what he heard:—

"This is a very dangerous kind of craft, because there are no bulwarks to it. If we were to slip, there is nothing to prevent our going overboard. If we have bad weather, we shall have to take her below, and that will be dreadful. An awkward step, a fright, and we shall have a rupture of the aneurism. I have seen instances of it. O my God! what is to become of us? Is she asleep? Yes. She is asleep. Is she in a swoon? No. Her pulse is pretty strong. She is only asleep. Sleep is a reprieve. It is the best of blindness. What can I do to prevent people from walking about here? Gentlemen, I beg you will make no noise. Do not come near us, if you please. You know a person in delicate health requires great care. She is feverish, you see. She is very young. 'T is a little creature who is rather feverish. I have put this mattress down here so that she may have a little air. I explain all this so that you will be careful. She sank down exhausted on the mattress as if in a swoon. But she is asleep now. I do hope that no one will wake her. I appeal to the ladies, if there are any present. Such a young girl, it is pitiful! We are only poor mountebanks, but I beg a little kindness, and if there is anything to pay for not making a noise, I will pay it. I thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Is there anybody there? No. I don't think there is. My talk is mere waste of breath. So much the better. Gentlemen, I thank you, if you are there;

and I thank you still more if you are not. Her forehead is covered with perspiration. So we must take our places in the galleys again, and resume our chains. Misery is come back. We are sinking again. A hand, a dread hand which we cannot see, but the weight of which we feel ever upon us, has suddenly hurled us back into obscurity and poverty. Be it so. We must bear it. But I will not have her ill. I must seem a fool to talk out loud like this, when I am alone; but she must feel she has some one near her when she wakes. What shall I do if somebody wakes her suddenly? No noise, in the name of Heaven! A sudden shock which would wake her suddenly, would end everything. It will be a pity if anybody comes. I believe every one on board is asleep. Thanks be to Providence for that mercy. And Homo? Where is he, I wonder? In all the confusion I forgot to tie him up. I do not know what I am doing half the time. It is more than an hour since I saw him. I suppose he has gone to look for his supper somewhere ashore. I hope nothing has happened to him. Homo! Homo!"

Homo struck his tail softly on the planks of the deck.

"You are here. Oh, you are here! Thank God for that. If Homo had been lost, it would have been too much to bear. She has moved her arm. Perhaps she is going to wake. Be quiet, Homo! The tide is turning. We shall sail directly. I think it will be a fine night. There is no wind: the flag droops. We shall have a good passage. I do not know what moon it is, but there is scarcely a movement in the clouds. There will be no swell. It will be a fine night. Her cheek is pale; it is only weakness! No, it is flushed; it is only fever! Stay! It is rosy. She is well! I can no longer see clearly. My poor Homo, I can no longer see distinctly. So we must begin life afresh. We must set

to work again. There are only we two left, you see. We will work for her, both of us! She is our child. Ah, the vessel is moving! We are off! Good-bye, London! Good-evening! good-night! To the devil with horrible London!"

He was right. He heard a dull creaking sound as the vessel moved away from the wharf. A man, the skipper, no doubt, just come up from below, was standing on the poop. He had slipped the hawser, and was working the tiller. Looking only at the rudder, as befitted the combined phlegm of a Dutchman and a sailor, listening to nothing but the wind and water, bending against the resistance of the tiller, as he worked it to port or starboard, he looked, in the gloom of the after-deck, like a phantom carrying a beam on its shoulder. He was quite alone. While they were in the river the other sailors were not needed. In a few minutes the vessel was in the middle of the stream, where she drifted tranquilly along. The Thames, little disturbed by the ebbing tide, was calm. Borne onward by the current, the vessel made rapid progress. Behind her the dark outlines of London were fading away in the mist.

Ursus went on talking.

"Never mind, I will give her digitalis. I am afraid that delirium will supervene. She perspires in the palms of her hands. What sin can we have committed in the sight of God? How quickly all this misery has come upon us! Hideous swiftness of evil! A stone falls. It has claws. It is like the hawk swooping down on the lark. That is destiny. There you lie, my sweet child! One comes to London. One says, 'What a fine city! What fine buildings!' Southwark is a magnificent suburb. One settles there. How I loathe the places now! How could one expect me to stay there? I am glad to leave. This is the 30th of April

I always hated the month of April. There are but two lucky days in April, — the 5th and the 27th; and four unlucky ones, — the 10th, the 20th, the 29th, and the 30th. This has been established beyond a doubt by Cardan's calculations. I wish to-day were over. Departure is a comfort. By dawn we shall be at Gravesend, and to-morrow evening at Rotterdam. Zounds! I will begin life over again in the van. We will draw it, won't we, Homo?"

A light tapping announced the wolf's consent.

Ursus continued: "If one could only get out of a grief as one gets out of a city! Homo, we must try to be happy. Alas! there is always some one to mourn for. A shadow remains on those who survive. You know whom I mean, Homo. There were four of us; now there are only three. Life is only a long loss of those whom we love. They leave a trail of sorrow behind them. Destiny amazes us by its immense stores of intolerable suffering; who, then, can wonder that the old are garrulous? It is despair that makes the dotard, old fellow! Homo, the wind continues favourable. We can no longer see the dome of St. Paul's. We shall pass Greenwich presently. That will be six good miles travelled. Oh, I am glad to turn my back forever on that odious capital, full of priests and magistrates and heartless people. I prefer looking at the leaves rustling in the woods. Her forehead is still covered with perspiration. I don't like those great purple veins in her arm. There is fever in them. Oh, all this is killing me! Sleep, my child. Yes; she is sleeping!"

Suddenly a voice was heard, — an ineffable voice, a far-away voice, which seemed to come at once from the heights and the depths; the voice of Dea.

All that Gwynplaine had felt hitherto seemed nothing. His good angel was speaking. It seemed as though

he heard words spoken from another world in a heaven-like trance.

"He did well to go," the voice said. "This world was not worthy of him. But I must go with him. Father, I am not ill; I heard you speak just now. I am comfortable, very comfortable. I was asleep. Father, I shall soon be happy."

"My child," said Ursus, in a voice of anguish; "what do you mean by that?"

"Father, do not mourn for me," was the only answer.

She paused, as if to take breath, and then these few words, uttered very slowly, reached Gwynplaine's ears.

"Gwynplaine is no longer here. Now I am blind indeed. I never knew what night was before. Night is absence."

The voice paused once more, and then continued: "I always feared that he would soar away. I felt that his place was in heaven. He has taken flight suddenly. It was natural that it should end thus. The soul flies away like a bird. But the nest of the bird was in the heavenly height where dwells the Great Load-stone, who draws all towards Him. I know where to find Gwynplaine. I have no doubt about the way. Father, it is up yonder. Later on you will join us, and Homo, too."

Homo, hearing his name pronounced, tapped his tail softly against the deck.

"Father," resumed the voice, "you understand that now Gwynplaine is no longer here, all is over. Even if I would remain, I could not, because one must breathe. We must not ask for that which is impossible. I was always with Gwynplaine, so it was quite natural I lived. Now Gwynplaine is no more, I die. One thing is certain: either he must come, or I must go; and as he cannot come back, I am going to him. It is easy to

die. It is not at all difficult. Father, that which is extinguished here shall be rekindled elsewhere. Life in this world is only a heartache. It cannot be that we shall always be so unhappy. When we go to what you call the stars, we shall marry, we shall never part again, and we shall love, love, love, for that is what God is."

"There, there, do not agitate yourself," pleaded Ursus.

The voice continued: "Well, for instance, last year in the spring we were together, and we were happy. How different it is now! I forget what little village we were in, but there were trees, and I heard the linnets singing. We came to London; all was changed. This is no reproach, mind. When one goes to a new place, how is one to know anything about it? Father, do you remember that one day there was a woman in the great box? You said, 'It is a duchess.' I felt sad. I thought it might have been better had we stayed in the little towns. After that Gwynplaine left us. Now my turn has come. Besides, you have told me yourself that when I was very little my mother died, and that I was lying on the ground with the snow falling upon me, and that Gwynplaine, who was also very little then, and alone in the world, like myself, picked me up, and that it was thus that I happened to live; so you cannot wonder that now I should feel it absolutely necessary to go and search the grave to see if Gwynplaine be in it. Because the only thing which exists in life is the heart; and after life, the soul. You hear what I say, father, do you not? What is moving? It seems as if we were in something that is moving, yet I do not hear the sound of wheels."

After a pause the voice added: "I cannot exactly make out the difference between yesterday and to-day. I do not complain. I do not know what has occurred; but something must have happened."

These words, uttered with deep and inconsolable sweetness, and with a sigh which Gwynplaine heard distinctly, wound up thus: "I must go, unless he should return."

"I do not believe in ghosts," Ursus muttered gloomily. "This is a ship," he continued. "You ask why we seem to be moving; it is because we are on board a vessel. Be calm; you must not talk so much. Daughter, if you have any love for me, do not agitate yourself, it will make you feverish. I am so old, I could not bear it if you were to be ill. Spare me! Do not be ill!"

Again the voice spoke: "What is the use of searching the earth for what we can only find in heaven?"

Ursus replied, with a half attempt at authority: "Be calm. There are times when you seem to have no sense at all. I command you to rest. After all, you cannot be expected to know what it is to rupture a blood-vessel. I should be calm if you were calm. My child, you owe me something as well; for though he picked you up, I sheltered you. You will make me ill. That is wrong. You must calm yourself, and go to sleep. All will come right. I give you my word of honour, all will come right. Besides, it is very fine weather. The night might have been made on purpose. To-morrow we shall be at Rotterdam, which is a city in Holland, at the mouth of the Meuse."

"Father," said the voice, "look here; when two beings have always been together from infancy, their union should not be disturbed, or death must come. It cannot be otherwise. I love you just the same, but I feel that I am no longer altogether with you, although I am as yet not altogether with him."

"Come! try to sleep," urged Ursus.

"I shall have sleep enough soon," the voice answered softly.

"I tell you that we are going to Holland, to Rotterdam, a large and beautiful city," Ursus replied in trembling tones.

"Father," continued the voice, "I am not ill; if you are anxious about that, you may rest easy. I have no fever. I am rather hot; but that is nothing."

"At the mouth of the Meuse — " stammered Ursus.

"I am quite well, father, but look here! I feel that I am going to die!"

"Don't be so foolish," said Ursus. Then he muttered under his breath: "Above all, God forbid that she should have a shock!"

There was a silence. Suddenly Ursus cried out, "What are you doing? Why are you getting up? Lie down again, I implore you."

Gwynplaine shuddered and stretched out his head.

CHAPTER III.

PARADISE REGAINED BELOW.

HE saw Dea. She had just raised herself up on the mattress. She had on a long white dress, carefully closed, and showing only the delicate contour of her throat. The sleeves covered her arms; the folds, her feet. A tracery of blue veins, hot and swollen with fever, was visible on her hands. She was shivering and rocking, rather than reeling, to and fro, like a reed. The lantern threw a flickering light on her beautiful face. Her unbound hair floated over her shoulders. No tears bedewed her cheeks. Her eyes shone brilliantly. She was pale, with that pallor which is like the transparency of a divine life in an earthly face. Her fragile and exquisite form was, as it were, blended and interfused with the folds of her robe. She wavered like the flicker of a flame, while, at the same time, she was dwindling into shadow. Her eyes, opened wide, were resplendent. She was as one just released from the sepulchre; a soul standing in the dawn.

Ursus, whose back only was visible to Gwynplaine, raised his arms in terror.

"Oh, my child! Oh, heavens! She is delirious. Delirium is what I feared most of all. She must have no shock, for that might kill her; yet nothing but a shock can prevent her going mad. Dead or mad, — what a situation! O God! what can I do? My child, lie down; lie down, I say!"

Meanwhile, Dea spoke. Her voice was almost inaudible, as if a cloud had already interposed between her and earth.

"Father, you are wrong. I am not in the least delirious. I hear all you say distinctly. You are telling me that there is a great crowd of people, that they are waiting, and that I must play to-night. I am quite willing. You see that I have my reason; but I do not know what to do, as I am dead, and Gwynplaine is dead. I am coming all the same. I am ready to play. Here I am; but Gwynplaine is no longer here."

"Come, my child," said Ursus, "do as I bid you. Lie down again."

"He is no longer here, — no longer here! Oh, how dark it is!" she moaned.

"Dark," muttered Ursus. "This is the first time she has ever uttered that word!"

Gwynplaine mounted the step of the van as noiselessly as possible, entered it, took down from the nail the cape and collar, put the collar round his neck, and descended from the van, still concealed by the projection of the cabin, the rigging, and the mast.

Dea continued murmuring. She moved her lips, and by degrees the murmur became a melody. In broken snatches, and with the interrupted cadences of delirium, she chanted the strange appeal she had so often addressed to Gwynplaine in "Chaos Vanquished." She sang, but her voice was as low and uncertain as the humming of a bee.

"Noche, quita te de alli!
El alba canta." . . . [1]

She stopped.

"No, it is not true. I am not dead. What was I saying? Alas! I am alive. I am alive; he is dead. I

[1] "Depart, O night! sings the dawn."

am below; he is above. He is gone. I remain. I shall hear his voice no more, nor his footstep. God, who had given us a little paradise on earth, has taken it away. Gwynplaine, it is over. I shall never feel you near me again. Never! And his voice! I shall never hear his voice again." And she sang: —

"Es menester a cielos ir —
Deja, quiero,
A tu negro
Caparazon." [1]

She stretched out her hand, as if seeking something in space on which she might rest.

Gwynplaine mysteriously appearing by the side of Ursus, who had suddenly become as though petrified, knelt before her.

"Never," said Dea, "never shall I hear him again."

She began, wandering, to sing again: —

Deja, quiero,
A tu negro
Caparazon."

Then she heard a voice — even the beloved voice — answering, —

"O ven! ama!
Eres alma,
Soy corazon." [2]

And at the same instant Dea felt beneath her hand the head of Gwynplaine. She uttered an indescribable cry.

"Gwynplaine!"

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[1] "We must go to heaven.
Take off, I entreat thee,
Thy black cloak."

[2] "O come and love!
Thou art the soul,
I am the heart."

A light, as of a star, illumined her pale face, and she tottered. Gwynplaine caught her in his arms.

"Alive!" cried Ursus.

"Gwynplaine, Gwynplaine!" Dea repeated.

And with her head bowed upon Gwynplaine's cheek, she whispered faintly, —

"You have come down to me again; I thank you, Gwynplaine."

And seated on his knee, she lifted up her head. Wrapt in his embrace, she turned her sweet face towards him, and fixed those eyes so full of light and shadow upon him as if she could really see him.

"It is you," she said.

Gwynplaine silenced her sobs with kisses. There are exclamations which are at once words, cries, and sobs, in which all ecstasy and all grief are mingled. They have no meaning, and yet tell all.

"Yes! it is! It is I, Gwynplaine, of whom you are the soul. Do you hear me? I, whose child, whose wife, whose star, whose breath of life you are! I, to whom you are eternity itself. It is I. I am here. I hold you in my arms. I am alive. I am yours. Oh, when I think that in a moment all would have been over — one minute more — but for Homo! I will tell you everything. How near hope is to despair! Dea, we live again! Dea, forgive me! Yes, yours forever. You are right. Touch my forehead. Make sure that it is I. If you only knew — but nothing can separate us now. I rise out of hell, and ascend into heaven. Am I not with you? You said that I descended. Not so; I re-ascend. Once more with you! Forever! — I tell you forever. Together! We are together! Who would have believed it? We have found each other again. All our troubles are past. Before us now, there is nothing but enchantment. We will renew our happy life, and we will shut the door so

fast that misfortune shall never enter again. I will tell you all. You will be astonished. The vessel has sailed. No one can prevent that now. We are on our voyage, and at liberty. We are going to Holland. We will marry. I have no fear about gaining a livelihood. What can hinder it? There is nothing to fear. I adore you!"

"Not so quick," stammered Ursus.

Dea, trembling, and with the delicacy of an angel's touch, passed her hand over Gwynplaine's face. He heard her say to herself, —

"It is thus that God is made."

Then she touched his clothes.

"The esclavine," she said, "the cape. Nothing changed. All as it was before."

Ursus, bewildered, delighted, smiling, drowned in tears, gazed at them, and addressed this aside to himself: —

"I don't understand it in the least. I am a stupid idiot, — I, who saw him carried to the grave! I cry, and I laugh. That is all I know. I am as great a fool as if I were in love myself. And that is just what I am. I am in love with them both. Old fool! Too much emotion! too much emotion! It is what I was afraid of. No, it is exactly what I wished for. Gwynplaine, be careful of her. Yes, let them kiss! It is no affair of mine. I am but a spectator. I am of no account whatever here, evidently, and yet it strikes me that I am. Bless you, my children!"

While Ursus was thus communing with himself, Gwynplaine exclaimed, —

"Dea, you are too beautiful! I don't know where my wits were these last few days. Truly, there is no one to compare with you on earth. I see you again, but as yet I can hardly believe it. In this ship! But tell me, how did it all happen? To what a condition they have

reduced you! But where is the Green Box? They have robbed you. They have driven you away. It is infamous. Oh, I will avenge you! I will avenge you, Dea! They shall answer for it. I am a Peer of England."

Ursus, as if stricken by a planet full in his breast, drew back, and looked at Gwynplaine attentively.

"It is certain that he is not dead; but can he have gone mad?" And he listened to him, dubiously.

"Have no fears, Dea," Gwynplaine resumed; "I will carry my complaint to the House of Lords."

Ursus looked at him again, and tapped his forehead with the tip of his forefinger. Then making up his mind:—

"It is all one to me," he said. "It will be all right, all the same. Be as mad as you like, my Gwynplaine. It is one of the rights of man. As for me, I am happy; but how did all this come about?"

The vessel continued to sail smoothly and swiftly on. The night grew darker and darker. The mists, which came inland from the ocean, were invading the zenith, from which no breeze blew them away. Only a few large stars were visible, and they disappeared one after another, so that soon there were none at all, and the whole sky was dark and soft. The river broadened until the banks on each side were nothing but two thin brown lines mingling with the gloom. Out of all this shadow rose a profound peace. Gwynplaine, half kneeling, held Dea in his embrace. They talked, they wept, they kissed, they whispered in a mad dialogue of joy. How are we to paint thee, O joy!

"My life!"

"My heaven!"

"My love!"

"My whole happiness!"

"Gwynplaine!"

"Dea, I am drunk with joy. Let me kiss your feet."

"So it is really you?"

"I have so much to say to you now that I do not know where to begin."

"One kiss!"

"O my wife!"

"Gwynplaine, do not tell me that I am beautiful. It is you who are handsome."

"I have found you again. I hold you to my heart. It is true. You are mine. I do not dream. Is it possible? Yes, it is. I live again. If you only knew! I have met with all sorts of adventures. Dea!"

"Gwynplaine, I love you!"

And Ursus murmured,—

"Mine is the joy of a grandfather."

Homo, having come out from under the van, was going from one to the other discreetly, exacting no attention, licking them left and right,— now Ursus' thick shoes, now Gwynplaine's cape, now Dea's dress, now the mattress. This was his way of giving his blessing.

They had passed Chatham and the mouth of the Medway, and were now approaching the sea. The serenity of the atmosphere was such that the passage down the Thames was being made without trouble; no manœuvring was needful, nor was any sailor called on deck. At the other end of the vessel the skipper, still alone, was steering. He was the only man aft. At the bow, the lantern lighted up the happy group of beings who, from the depths of misery, had been suddenly raised to happiness by such an unexpected meeting.

CHAPTER IV.

NAY; ON HIGH!

SUDDENLY Dea, disengaging herself from Gwynplaine's embrace, arose. She pressed both her hands against her heart, as if to still its throbbings.

"What is wrong with me?" she exclaimed. "There is something the matter. Joy is suffocating. No, it is nothing! That is lucky. Your reappearance, O my Gwynplaine, has overwhelmed me, — overwhelmed me with happiness. All this heavenly joy which you have aroused in my heart has intoxicated me. When you were absent, I felt myself dying. The life which was forsaking me you have brought back. I felt as if something was being torn away within me. It must have been only the shadows, for I feel life dawning in my brain, — a glowing life, a life of fever and delight. This life which you have just given me is wonderful. It is so heavenly, that it makes me suffer a little. It seems as if my soul is enlarging and can scarcely be retained in my body. I feel something like a beating of wings within my breast. I feel strangely, but oh, so happy! Gwynplaine, you have saved my life!"

She flushed, became pale, then flushed again, and fell.

"Alas!" said Ursus, "you have killed her."

Gwynplaine extended his arms towards Dea. Extreme anguish suddenly superseding extreme ecstasy, — what a shock! He would himself have fallen, had he not had to support her.

"Dea!" he cried, shuddering, "what is the matter?"

"Nothing," said she; "I love you!"

She lay in his arms limp, like a piece of linen; her hands were hanging down helplessly.

Gwynplaine and Ursus placed Dea on the mattress.

"I cannot breathe lying down," she said feebly.

They lifted her up.

"Fetch a pillow," said Ursus.

"What for? I have Gwynplaine," she replied.

She laid her head on the shoulder of Gwynplaine, who was sitting behind her, supporting her, his eyes wild with grief.

"Oh, how happy I am!" she exclaimed.

Ursus took her wrist, and counted the pulsation of the artery. He did not shake his head. He said nothing, nor did he express his opinion except by the rapid movement of his eyelids, which were opening and shutting convulsively, as if to prevent a flood of tears from bursting forth.

"What is the matter?" asked Gwynplaine.

Ursus placed his ear against Dea's left side.

Gwynplaine repeated his question eagerly, fearful of the answer.

Ursus looked at Gwynplaine, then at Dea. His face was livid.

"We must be just opposite Canterbury," he stammered. "The distance from here to Gravesend cannot be very great. We shall have fine weather all night. We need fear no attack at sea, because the fleets are all on the coast of Spain. We shall have a good passage."

Dea, growing paler and paler, clutched her robe convulsively. She heaved a sigh of inexpressible sadness, and murmured: —

"I know what this is, — I am dying!"

Gwynplaine rose in terror. Ursus held Dea.

"Die! You die! No; it shall not be! You cannot

die! Die now! Die at once! It is impossible! God is not so ferociously cruel as to give you and to take you back in the same moment. No; such a thing cannot be. It would make one lose all faith in him. Then, indeed, would everything be a snare, — the earth, the sky, the cradles of infants, the human heart, love, the stars above us. God would be a traitor, and man a dupe. There would be nothing in which one could believe. It would be an insult to creation. Everything would be chaos. You do not know what you are saying, Dea. You shall live! I command you to live! You must obey me! I am your husband and your master; I forbid you to leave me! Oh, heavens! Oh, wretched man that I am! No, it cannot be; I remain in the world after you! Why, it is as monstrous as that there should be no sun! Dea! Dea! arouse yourself. It is but a moment of passing pain. One feels a shudder at times, and thinks no more about it. It is absolutely necessary that you should get well and cease to suffer. *You* die! What have I done to you? The very thought of it drives me mad. We belong to each other, and we love each other. You have no reason for going! It would be unjust! Have I committed any crime? Besides, you have forgiven me. Oh, you would not make me desperate; have me become a villain, a madman; drive me to perdition? Dea, I entreat you! I conjure you! I supplicate you! Do not die!"

And clinching his hands in his hair, agonized with fear, stifled with tears, he threw himself at her feet.

"My Gwynplaine," said Dea, "it is no fault of mine."

There rose to her lips a red froth, which Ursus wiped away with a fold of her robe, before Gwynplaine, who was prostrate at her feet, could see it.

Gwynplaine took her feet in his hands, and implored her in all kinds of confused words.

"I tell you, I will not have it! *You* die? I have no strength left to bear it. Die? Yes; but both of us together — not otherwise. *You* die, my Dea? I will never consent to it! My divinity! my love! Do you not understand that I am with you? I swear that you shall live! Oh, you cannot have thought what will become of me after you are gone. If you had any idea how necessary you are to me, you would see that it is absolutely impossible! Dea, you see I have no one but you! The most extraordinary things have happened to me. You will hardly believe that I have just explored the whole of life in a few hours! I have found out one thing, — that there is nothing in it! You exist! if you did not, the universe would have no meaning. Stay with me! Have pity on me! Since you love me, live. If I have just found you again, it is to keep you! Wait a little longer; you cannot leave me like this, now that we have been together only a few minutes! Do not be impatient! Oh, Heaven, how I suffer! You are not angry with me, are you? You know that I could not help going when the wapentake came for me. You will breathe more easily presently, see if you do not. Dea, all has been set right. We are going to be happy. Do not drive me to despair, Dea! I have not wronged you!"

These words were not spoken, but sobbed. They burst from his breast, — now in a lament which might have attracted the dove, now in a roar which might have made lions recoil.

Dea answered him in a voice growing weaker and weaker, and breaking at almost every word.

"Alas! it is of no use, my beloved! I see that you are doing all you can. An hour ago I wanted to die; now I do not. Gwynplaine! my adored Gwynplaine! how happy we have been! God placed you in my life,

and now he takes me out of yours. You see, I am going. You will remember the Green Box, won't you; and poor little blind Dea? You will remember my song? Do not forget the sound of my voice, and the way in which I said, 'I love you!' I will come back and say it to you again, in the night, while you are asleep. Yes, we found each other again; but it was too much happiness. It was to end at once. It is decreed that I am to go first. I love my father, Ursus, and my brother, Homo, very dearly. You are all so good. There is no air here. Open the window. My Gwynplaine, I did not tell you, but I was jealous of a woman who came one day. You do not even know of whom I speak. Is it not so? Cover my arms, I am a little cold. And Fibi and Vinos, where are they? One gets to love everybody. One feels a friendship for all those who have been connected with one's happiness. We have a kindly feeling towards them for having witnessed our joy. Why has all this passed away? I have not clearly understood what has happened during the last two days. Now I am dying. Leave me in my dress. When I put it on, I foresaw that it would be my shroud. I wish to keep it on. Gwynplaine's kisses are upon it. Oh, what would I not have given to have lived! What a happy life we led in our poor little van! How we sang! How I listened to the applause! What joy it was never to be separated from each other! It seemed to me that I was living in a cloud with you. I knew one day from another, although I was blind. I knew that it was morning, because I heard Gwynplaine; I felt that it was night, because I dreamed of Gwynplaine. I felt that I was wrapped up in something, which was his soul. We adored each other so rapturously. It is all fading away; and there will be no more songs. Alas, that I cannot live on! You will think of me, my beloved!"

Her voice was growing fainter. Death was stealing away her breath. She folded her thumbs within her fingers, — a sign that her last moments were approaching. It seemed as though the first uncertain utterances of an angel, just created, were blended with the last faltering accents of the dying girl.

"You will think of me, won't you?" she murmured. "It would be very sad to be dead, and to be remembered by no one. I have been wayward at times; I beg pardon of you all. I am sure that, if God had so willed it, we might yet have been happy, my Gwynplaine; for we take up but very little room in the world and we might have earned our bread together in another land. But God has willed it otherwise. I cannot make out in the least why I am dying. I never complained of being blind, so that I cannot have offended any one. I should never have asked for anything, but always to be blind as I was, by your side. Oh, how sad it is to have to part!"

Her words were becoming more and more inaudible, evaporating into each other, as if they were being blown away.

"Gwynplaine," she resumed, "you will think of me, won't you? I shall crave it even when I am dead." "Oh, keep me with you!" she pleaded.

Then, after a pause, she added, —

"Come to me as soon as you can. I shall be very unhappy without you, even in heaven. Do not leave me long alone, my beloved. My paradise is here; above, there is only heaven! Oh, I cannot breathe! My beloved! My beloved! My beloved!"

"Mercy!" cried Gwynplaine, "have mercy, O my God!"

"Farewell!" murmured Dea.

Gwynplaine pressed his lips to her beautiful icy hands. For a moment it seemed as if she had ceased to breathe. Then she raised herself on her elbow, and a strange

splendour flashed from her eyes, and through an ineffable smile her voice rang out clearly : —

"Light!" she cried. "I see!"

She fell back on the mattress, rigid and motionless.

"Dead!" said Ursus.

And the poor old man, as if crushed with despair, bowed his bald head and buried his swollen face in the folds of the gown which covered Dea's feet, and lay there as if in a swoon.

Gwynplaine's face was terrible in its agony.

He arose, lifted his eyes, and gazed into the dark heavens above him.

Seen by no one on earth, but looked down upon, perhaps, as he stood there in the darkness, by some invisible presence, he raised his hands heavenward and murmured wildly : —

"I come! I come!"

As he spoke, he strode across the deck, straight towards the side of the vessel, as if beckoned by a vision.

He walked slowly, never once casting down his eyes. A smile came upon his face, such as Dea's had just worn. He walked straight on, as if watching something. In his eyes was a light like the reflection of a soul seen from afar off.

"Yes!" he cried out. Every step brought him nearer to the vessel's side.

His gait was rigid, his arms were extended, his head was thrown back, his eyes were fixed, his movements were ghost-like.

He advanced without haste and without hesitation with fatal precision, as though there were no yawning gulf and open grave before him.

"Yes, I will follow you," he murmured. "I understand the sign that you are making to me."

His eyes were fixed upon a certain spot in the sky

where the shadow was deepest. The smile was still upon his face.

The sky was perfectly black; there was no star visible in it, and yet he evidently saw one.

He crossed the deck.

A few stiff and ominous steps, and he had reached the very edge.

"I come," said he; "Dea, behold, I come!"

One step more, — there was no bulwark, — the void was before him; he strode into it.

He fell.

The night was thick and dull, the water deep. It swallowed him up. He disappeared calmly and silently. No one saw or heard him. The ship sailed on, and the river flowed tranquilly on.

Shortly afterwards the vessel reached the sea.

When Ursus recovered consciousness, he found that Gwynplaine was no longer with him, and he saw Homo by the vessel's edge, baying in the darkness and gazing down into the water.

On the last page of the manuscript is the following note: —

"Finished August 23, 1868, at half-past ten o'clock in the morning, in Brussels, No. 4 Place des Barricades."

This work, most of which was written in Guernsey, was begun in Brussels, July 21, 1866, and finished in Brussels, August 23, 1868.

THE END.

PHILLIPS ACADEMY
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DATE DUE

OCT 23
D 17 '29
F 16 '30
O 10 '30
O 28 '30
D 17 '30
Apr 24 '34
May 9 '35
Apr 15
Mar 15 '39
Jun 7 '39
Mar 13 '40
May 29 '40
Aug 14 '42
Apr 29 '48
Aug 3 '49
May 15 '60
Oct 22 '60
MAR 4 - '68
JUL 24 '69
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